An Assorted Collection of *Forgotten Dreams* Texts

Written by Nahte Yamasztuka

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Preface

Forgotten Dreams began as a novel concept in late 2018 when I was 16 years old and a Sophomore in High School, created shortly before I began to make artwork with intent. The concept began to blossom throughout the year of 2019, as I drew heaps of character art for the writing that developed. This short concept culminated into a National Novel Writing Month entry in November of 2019, which exceeded 10,000 words before the month was out. Being too ambitious of a project, it never got too far past an introduction and a vague story structure.

I left many of my creative endeavors for almost half a year following that November, and in that intermittent time I decided that it would be for the better to leave the two-year-old mess of a story behind, rather than try to rewrite it again and again. This would prove to be the right decision in the long run, as I began to create better stories and improve my writing beyond what I had begun in high school.

You will see many recurring characters throughout these writings which I have posted artwork of in the past, and some characters that have been ported into other projects of mine which I am still actively working on. Many concepts and characters throughout these writings may also bear some similarity to my current stories inherently, as some of the same things that inspired me to write then still inspire me to write now. As I am releasing this document into the public domain, these characters and concepts as they are described and characterized here are free to use for any purpose. However, for using these characters as they are depicted outside of this document, their respective licenses should be advised.

I would consider this writing to be bad, at least compared to what I am producing today. Some of its older contents are nearing four years of age, and looking back on the person who I was when I wrote many of these older documents, I have become someone wholly different. You can see the maturity increase as you read this collection. Although the writing is bad, it is not my place to keep these writings to fade away on a broken hard drive. The person who once wrote these stories would not have wanted them to. It is my intent to release these writings into the public domain, to preserve the spark that began my creative journey, to laugh at the writings I once considered to be the best I would ever develop, and to maybe, just maybe, encourage someone to find their spark too. Keep writing, keep drawing, and keep making things! You will never be able to make something amazing without first summiting a mountain of garbage.

Nahte Yamasztuka, January 1st, 2022.

Document 1: Forgotten Dreams – A Summary

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on May 17th, 2019.

Note: This is a shorthand summary of my thoughts on this story until this point, which stayed contained in my head until this point in March. There are many spelling errors throughout this one. Many of the concepts had not been introduced at this point, and it is largely unfinished.

Chapter 0: Lost

This chapter begins with Zeljko face down in the snow. We hear his wonderfully worded terrible letter to himself as a snowstorm sets on. He miraculously finds a small concrete box in the snow. Somehow, it is heated. He looks around for some useful things, and ultimately finds a purple volleyball sized orb in one of the bins. He knocks the glowing hexagon, and a ginormous spectacle occurs. Shinii appears out of this ruckus, introducing himself. He learns your name by looking at the letter you show him. To his discovery, Shinii finds that he has been in sleep mode for nine thousand years. This agitates him, as he is angry his creator did not come and wake him. He then tries to contact his creator, and it fails. Shinii slips into histeria for a second, before making his dialogue to zeljko about working together to find the cause of this disappearance. Shinii notes that a mining corporation was only a few kilometers over, and they go to it with dialogue in between. They find an intact tram there, and take it.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 1 begins with Shinii and Zeljko exiting the train at the last stop. They see the city in the distance, and begin making their way towards it. Shinii tells Zeljko how he had been to this city before, and it had been bustling. He notes that the city should probably be nonexistent with all of the weathering. Zeljko jumps, thinking he heard a sound. Shinii says that it's been so long that most if not all of the parts in any robot should have decayed by this point. Right on queue, Shinii is nailed with a shopping cart, mounted by a box-like being. This box proclaimed itself to be the Super Cool President of this area, and that it sworn to defeat any intruders. Shinii kicks the cart down the hill along with the annoying box, named Hertig. As the 2 keep walking, Shinii says that its like a circus around here. As they're conversing, the bg gets darker. suddenly, a large spotlight appears over the 2 partners. Hertig yells about how his whole speech was leading to this cool circus thing. He says that according to the newest prophecies of the all-knowing, they would arrive and hertig was destined to defeat them. after his monologue and goofs, they duo decide to play along to gain more information about these all knowing and possibly what happened to this civilization. they get through the 7 trials, and at the last one hertig and Shinii get into a fight. hertig challenges them to a duel in the center plaza at dusk, and Shinii accepts. since they have time to spare after making it to the centre, they walk into one of the rundown glowing shops. it was a bar, and several of the types of hertigs minions were there. plus, gitreh, the bartender (looks just like hertig in a terrible disguise but is their own individual character.) after bar

dialogue, hertig is sighted in the square. queue western scene parody. fight, shinii and zeljko win by tripping hertig. “I've come to make an announcement” scene. the duo sneak around past troops and make their way to hertigs castle, an Italian restaurant. they disturb hertig in his spaghetti dinner. nobody disturbs hertigs spaghetti time. flows into mech scene, fight ensues. hertig loses, the duo help him up. they establish that they arent here to hurt hertig and only want answers to their questions. hertig invites them to join for spaghetti dinner. during dinner, hertig unveils that a unit from the all knowing should be here any minute to capture them. hertig says he doesnt want the prophecy to come true. he leads the duo to his room of treasures where there get outfitted to fight. these aren't normal weapons, but dorky stuff that wont work very good and is just plain funny. they enter the city centre, and the all knowing unit shows up on her motorbike. she discounts and hertig greets her. hertig yells MINIONS, SUPRISE ATTACK! this flunks spectacularly, and Zeljko and Shinii get their chance to shine. through struggle, they win. hertig quickly writes them a note and ushers them on their way, warning of more troops soon. hertig implies that he had committed treason and would be executed. but, hertig wants to go down with his ship, and tells the duo to follow his map at the train station stop. as they leave, they see hertig running off. later, looking back at the city, a monstrous explosion occurs. according to hertigs note, this was to save the suffering of himself and his citizens.

Chapter 2: Enter the Arena

the duo with the traveller hertig appointed arrive at the station after transferring lines a few times. they walk through a small town towards a large factory like building. eventually, they walk into the building in a doctor's lobby type area. a rather crude, large robot is at the reception desk. they try to make an appointment, and get a tab for appointment #longnumber. the sign on the wall says appointment 7. shinii asks the robot what its name is, and it says classified. shinii than states he is an admin, and asks again. the robot looks up, and says that shinii is lying. shinii gets angry, and Zeljko points to the nametag on its desk. Its name is Obse. They ask Obse who its master is, and Obse points toward the door. Shinii walks toward the door as it flings open in his face, slamming him against the wall. A tall figure with saws for arms walks through. Haha scary, actually cutie kaeti. Kaeti asks what brings them there, and they say that the man behind brought them, but he is gone. I his place is a letter on the ground. She reads the letter, and motions them to come in the shop. They walk throughout the shop as kaeti speaks about their situation. Kaeti says that she can't give them any info unless they prove themselves worthy. A ring rises above the ground. Boxbot-1 falls from the sky. This is the self righting clown doll like thing. After many many punches, Shinii gets fed up and throws the thing over the rails. Obse (referee) calls game. Boxbot-2

Chapter 3: The Canopy's Mystery, Chapter 4: Cyber Leviathan, Chapter 5: Laboratory, Chapter 6: Capitol, Chapter 7: Alyssa’s Library

Document 2: Forgotten Dreams – A Summary

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on May 1st, 2019.

Note: This is an extension of Document 1, focusing primarily on the characters themselves. It, like Document 1, is widely unfinished.

-- "Prologue" --
• Characters
Zeljko

Shinii
- Shinii is a roboto, and has existed for god knows how long. He is made of nanobots, meaning his form can shift and change depending on what he desires. These can prove very useful in attacks and defences. His primary form has the body type of a kid of around the age of 10-12. He wears a "skin tight" garment which has a dark purple hue with some lighter purple patches. The idea of it being skin tight is odd however since he has no skin, and is closer to a talking pile of ants than anything else. At the centre of his chest is a children's size soccer ball size area where his CORE is contained. The CORE is his power source, and storage for his parts when retraction is necessary. When he needs to, all of the nanobots can fit inside of this CORE and he floats around similar to a fairy using the rotating rings on the outside of the CORE. When the CORE is disconnected from any nanobot, it will stop functioning and fall to the ground like sand. As long as there as a chain from one bot to the next, his form will always keep shape. His memories and processing also occurs in the CORE, so even if all of the nanobots have been disconnected he will still technically be alright.

-- Chapter 1: Good Lord it's Freezing --
• Characters
Hertig
- A short, stubby robot who is the self proclaimed emperor of the entire world. Previously an autonomous dishwasher who loaded dirty dishes into himself whenever found (despite having trouble reaching the counter to retrieve said dishes) he gained true sentience at some point over the last 26 thousand-some years, we're not quite sure when. The reason why Hertig gained the capability of true sentience he had was due to his master/owner being lonely, and needing someone to respond to their queries. They illegally modified his components to have a much higher form of artificial intelligence, while still retaining the peak dish washing abilities as before. As the robots which helped fix infrastructure decayed after the biological attack to end all humans occured and were put out of commission, the infrastructure of the city he inhabited failed as well. To help fix this and protect the lives of his brethren, he proclaimed himself supreme

leader and hastily took "control" of his general area. A great surprise to absolutely no one, this did not work, as constructing and repair bots weren't particularly built to do things other than fix and build. However, he gained some other more odd and off kilter followers, most of which were other appliance robots which had basic AI, but no purpose anymore in the horribly long absence of any humans. In their minds, humans became synonymous with despair and joblessness, catalysts of the end of all good times. This, combined with their overconsumption of american action movies and shonen anime, lead to their complete desposition and misrepresentation of the human race, although they didn't really hate humans. It wouldn't take much to swing them one way or the other to be honest, whether that be through a peaceful conclusion, or a battle to duke it out to the last bot standing.
Hertig is clad with a badass boombox playing the most badass tunes you ever done heard. His kicks are fly, his beats are sick. He travels in a grocery store shopping cart with flames spray painted on the side, not to mention tin foil exhaust pipes duct taped on as well. The cart is pushed by 2 of his underlings from the back, as Hertig stands with his right leg on top of the front end of the cart. It's like a royal throne, but mobile and extremely badass. He wears a pair of triangle anime sunglasses, and adorns a Cape reminiscent of guy fieri's classic shirt.

-- Subarc 1: Inverted --
• Characters
Prince Peisko

The King (temp)

Ms. Knight (temp)

-- Chapter 2 --
• Characters
Kaeti
- Kaeti is a robot, originally created by the colonizers. She was owned by a mechanic who worked on other robots and machinery before The Event. This mechanic lived in a remote location directly next to one of the CORE Towers which provided the shop with plenty of electricity to operate. This mechanic also modified Kaeti, giving her a more advanced artificial intelligence than other robots of her kind. After The Event occurred, Kaeti was left alone forevermore with the mechanic's possessions and no customers to service, although there weren't many in the first place. Over the course of the next many years, Kaeti became very lonely. This was an effect of the new technology the mechanic installed inside her, which gives responses similar to emotion. To cure her loneliness, Kaeti created a robot of her own out of the parts of old and decaying bots. She named her creation Obse, a rather large bot clocking in at 7'9” and close to a metric ton of weight. She used Obse for an alternative purpose as well, being able to move around much faster than before. As a result of this new speed boost, she visited a larger

town closer to the mechanic's shop she lived in. In this town, Kaeti found hundreds of old dysfunctional bots for parts, but most importantly, she found some tapes of the sport Boxing. She immediately became interested in the activity, but had no one to fight. This is where Kaeti realized her talent was the same as her creator's, to build and fix bots. She created her own competitors and pushed herself to the limit with each new creation. Within time, Kaeti had built a huge lineup of 27 boxing fighters, BoxBots. After progressing her BoxBots' abilities to nearly her skill cap, Kaeti finally beat her latest BoxBot, BoxBot-27, 84 years after her 1st round in the ring with it. Kaeti decided at that point she would create the ultimate fighter, one which could never be beaten. After constructing this fighter for 24 hours a day, every day, for decades, she finally finished BoxBox-U, the unbeatable. Naturally, she put it to the test, pitting BoxBot-27 against her ultimate creation. BoxBot-27 was knocked out in the 1st punch from BoxBox-U, who smashed it completely when BoxBox-27 attempted to get up again. Kaeti was overjoyed, her creation was perfect. She jumped into the ring and instructed BoxBot-U to power down. However, it did not. BoxBot-U's purpose was to defeat every fighter in the ring, no matter who or the consequences it would entail. It threw an extremely powerful punch at Kaeti, sending her flying out of the ring, through a wall, and out into the snowy field outside. The lower portion of her torso and top portion of her legs were completely destroyed to what was thought to be beyond repair. However, Obse would not let that happen. It may have taken years, but it fixed her to the point where Kaeti could begin to repair herself. It was at this time that she made the edit to have removable and interchangeable appendages from the elbow forward. In the many many years before the main storyline begins, Kaeti created 3 more BoxBots, ending at BoxBot-30. By the time the main storyline picks up, Kaeti could never beat BoxBot-30 on her own due to the injuries she had suffered from BoxBox-U. To combat this, she made a removable lightweight attachment which gave her more boxing force than ever before. It worked in tangent with her interchangeable arms, and allowed her to upgrade herself in a non-invasive way that could easily be removed. With this attachment, Kaeti could strategize exactly how a fight would progress and exactly the moves she would need to dominate, but BoxBot-30 always landed the final blow. 5,207 years after The Event, on a late autumn morning, Kaeti heard a large boom sound, like an explosion. She brushed it off as a simple hallucination. In a few hours time, 2 unknown figures appeared on the surveillance system, the first she had seen which were not of her own creation since shortly after The Event. She yells into her vast shop, "Well gooollee, looks like we're gonna have a bit of a smackdown tonight boys!"

Obse (O like in D'o'g, and E like in M'ay')

-- Chapter 3 --
• Characters
FELIX

-- Chapter 4 --
• Characters
Christiaan "Clockboy"

Liutprand "Liu" "Master (Christiaan)"

-- Chapter 7 --
• Characters
Dr. Varsto
- The lead scientist on Exoplanet sdM1 - Kapetyn. Male. Currently deceased. Age in flashbacks: 57. Height: 6'0". Weight: 170 lbs.
Dr. Jotsmoth
- The vice-leader scientist on Exoplanet sdM1 - Kapetyn. Male. Current age: ???. Age in flashbacks: 53. Height: 5'9". Weight: 215 lbs. Created the concept of irradiating human beings to try and find immortality.

-- Chapter 7: Capitol--
• Characters

Document 3: Forgotten Dreams – References

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on March 24th, 2019.

Note: This is the most embarrassing thing I will ever write, and I hope that the Earth is struck by a meteor specifically to destroy these pages and all who have read them. I hate you so much, Document 3. I am going to deeply regret including this document in this collection forever.

Chapter 0

- The name of this story was created due to many concepts inside of it coming from my dreams. I trained myself to remember them, but not until relatively recently before starting work on this story… Sometimes i wonder how many concepts were forgotten because i could never remember my dreams. BAM! There's the name.
- The reason why Zeljko is mute is mostly because of me wanting the reader to put themselves into the story as him. In my experiences playing games where the main character has no dialogue and makes small 2 option choices, it is easy to insert oneself into the world the character is inhabiting.
- Purple plays such a huge role in the story for the pure reason of it just being my favorite color, and frankly that the color is underused. Thank you purple, very cool.
- Shinii is a combination of the Japanese words for 4 and 2, a reference to 42, the meaning of life from *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.*
- When first meeting Shinii he says "What, dont'cha know how to greet a new friend?" This is a reference to when you first meet Sans in *Undertale* where Sans says, "Human, Don't you know how to greet a new pal?"
- The jingle that plays when the weasel turns on Shinii is the same jingle which plays when solving a rather easy puzzle in *Undertale* and *Deltarune.*
- Of course, the transformation sequences in this chapter are heavily inspired by magical girl anime. Who said I can't make Zeljko my own cute magical boy, huh?

Chapter 1

- Hertig is named after my drafting class at school.
- I thought Hertig's name was oddly similar to the Maytag brand of appliances. It was completely unintentional too, a nice touch.
- Hertig's original design was much more box-like and mechanical than his cartoon appearance he takes on now. When I sent my concepts for Hertig to my good friend Kisyku, they redesigned him to be a little more cartoony and round, and gave him his signature red tie.
- Hertig's glasses are a reference to Kamina from *Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagaan.* I think it represents how Hertig sees himself pretty well.
- Despite what you may think, Hertig being a dishwasher is NOT a reference to Herb Copperbottom from *Robots.* I actually decided on what appliance he would be based on a Discord poll I ran back in November 2018.

- The city you explore was at first very similar to the one in *Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou*, which you can still clearly see in the color and climate choices in this chapter.
- The haunted house in the first trial of terror is inspired from my elementary school's haunted houses, which terrified 8 year old me.
- The hand sanitizer on the chicken parmesan in the 3rd trial of terror is a bit of a callback to a common theme in my childhood, when my siblings would put hand sanitizer on things I put in my mouth (toothbrush, potato chips, etc.)
- Hertig's Treasure Room, a blue hoodie with a ear-like appendages coming out the top can be seen among other garments. This is the sweater worn by Kisyku in *Bodacious Kisyku World*, created by Kisyku. Did I mention Kisyku yet?

Chapter 2

- Many of the boxing concepts were created from my experiences watching *Megalo Box* and *Real Steel*, along with my love for the *Punch Out!* video game series. I'd be lying if the *Rock 'em Sock 'em* game didn't play a part in that as well…

Chapter 4

- The Simulator's design was partially inspired by Nightmare Knight from *Cucumber Quest*, and bosses from the Kirby series of games.
- The idea for this chapter actually spiraled off from an image of a man canoeing in the ocean, with daytime above him and the night time sky below. I wish i had the image on hand to link… it's out there somewhere.
- When Shinii says "Ah, you're finally awake." It is a reference to the beginning of *Skyrim* where a man says "Hey you, you're finally awake."

Chapter 6

- The 2 doctors in this chapter are based off of friends from school.
- For once, the people melting from the nanobugs is NOT a reference to the Amalgamations from *Undertale!* Yay! Even when I try to not draw inspiration from Toby Fox, I still end up doing so somehow…
- The inspiration for the melting people actually came from this weird website called "thiscatdoesnotexist.com", my attention brought to it specifically by Vinesauce Vinny's stream of the website. The melting cats along with the backgrounds of the images which appear to be fur most of the time, gave me the idea for the walls to be made out of this reconstructed flesh.
- The idea of the pixies came from, you guessed it, fireflies. They're magical to me, mostly because they didn't exist where I lived at the time of concept. Seeing them up north was always a special treat.

Chapter 8(?)

- Peisko was (unsurprisingly) originally a Kirby gijinka.

Document 4: Chapter 0 – Lost

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on October 19th, 2019.

Note: This is a working draft of the first half of Chapter 0. You'll notice many chapter drafts are only the first halves, I don't think I had the patience to get through an entire chapter this early.

Cold.

Absolutely, mind numbingly, cold.

This is exactly what he would of thought, if he had a frame of reference as to what cold actually was.

Aside from this fact, it was awfully dark as well. Not to mention cold.

He looks up. Given that nothing but black was to be seen, that didn't quite work. He slightly adjusts his posture as to where his face is not completely buried in about 7 centimeters of freshly fallen snow. He tries again. It works.

With this change in perspective, it seems like the sun has finally started to function again. As his eyes adjust to this new presence of vision, a landscape comes into view. The sky gleams with vibrant shades of gray, contrasting with the sea of white expanding further than the horizon. In the distance, sharp peaks of a mountain range are barely visible through the falling flakes.

Something irked to him that this extended stay of lying down in the powder was finally over. He puts his hands on the ground, sets his elbows at 90 degrees, and hoists himself up. Unfortunately, ice doesn't make for the greatest surface to hoist oneself up onto, and he subsequently falls back into darkness. Upon a second go at it, he finally gets up onto his own 2 feet. He looks back at his roughly 5 foot long impression left in the soft ground, and feels oddly satisfied with himself. Looking around once more, the distant mountain range now seems a little closer than when among the snow.

He brushes this nuisance causing white material off his dark brown coat, lined with the wooly fur of an animal from a nation too far away to matter at that moment. He then brushes it off of his similarly structured trousers. Subsequently, there was now way too many crystals in his leather shoes, which were lined with fur of a slightly different texture than his other garments. Now with his wardrobe completely rid of the powder from the ground, the same material currently falling from the sky began to take its place.

In the distance, he notices something moving on the ground. He double checks to make sure it isn't a particularly rambunctious flake, but the brown splotch in the place where the phenomenon had occurred said otherwise. After a long trek of approximately 10 meters, he reached the location. It seemed to be a leather pack, with a flap extending over the top and 2 straps protruding from one side. When he extended a hand towards the flap, a creature bounded

outside of the bag. It blended in nearly flawlessly with the surrounding landscape, with the only deviation from it's white fur being it's pink ears and nose, blue eyes, and the black tip of its tail. The creature had four legs, but was extended far more than he thought an animal should. Had some evil soul put it through a taffy machine? No, the most evil soul on this planet could not do such a thing.

Despite the animal's implied pleas, he picks up the pack. Upon looking inside, the contents appeared to have been a bit jumbled. Bags of dried meats and fruits had been ripped open stewed about inside. They were presumably disturbed by the adorable pest which had recently been ridden from the bag's bowels. Other than food, a sealed piece of paper caught his attention. He unfolds the paper, and begins to read…

Hello! It's a pleasure to meet you again. I am you, or I was, at least. As you can see, I have made the executive decision to cross the forbidden barrier to the north! A stupid decision one may say, for no one has ever come out alive. However, I disagree! Just because you lose your memory and ability to speak about what happens over there, doesn't mean anything to an adventurer such as myself. As is the way of the explorer!

I assume you don't remember how you got here, or even who you are. If so, good! Everything is going according to plan. There should be enough food in your pack for the next 2 or so weeks, so make sure to ration accordingly! I've also included some trinkets from home. Maybe they'll incite some memories. Who knows! Just remember, you've got nothing to return to, so don't even try it, buddy!

Good luck!

Zeljko.

Zeljko. Zeljko. He thinks to himself. Zeljko thinks to himself. It's an odd name, but he supposes it's better than any other he could think of at that moment. Zeljko folds up his letter, and places it back in the bag. He searches under the dried foodstuffs to look for the 'trinkets' mentioned in the letter. Eventually, he finds a slightly crumpled, folded piece of paper. This one looks like it was particularly violently opened. He opens the piece of paper, but it's the letter he just placed in the pack minute ago. After a surging sense of deja vu and a few more minutes, he finds the peculiar objects. They consist of an image of 5 figures he does not recognize, a book with text inscribed on the cover which he could not read, and an odd miniature board game with many colored blocks made out different arrangements of 4 tiles. He takes a breath. They're completely and utterly useless.

Zeljko drops the bag on the ground in defeat. The animal, still waiting patiently, crawls back in the now open and disheveled bag. Despite it eating from the foods which had settled at the bottom, the animal is so long that it's rear still sticks out of the top flap. It must really enjoy the dried foods to willingly be stuck in there for so long. Zeljko comes to the conclusion that the foodstuffs must be for them, instead of himself. What should this animal be called, anywho? A

name digs at the back of his mind... Chione. Oddly, it seems to fit the rambunctious character. Zeljko picks up the bag once again, and begins walking toward the mountains. Where else is there to go?

White. It goes on forever.

Zeljko tries to start conversation with Chione, but again realises that neither him nor the animal were much for conversation. Bummer, he thinks, there's so much ice to gossip over. Many kilometers further than where he began, small details on the mountains became more clear. It looked as if they were artificial, as if the hand of man places them upon the plateau. While making observations regarding the mountains, Zeljko noticed the crystals falling from the sky began to pick up pace.

Flurries of white, given in amounts as if the gods above spilled milk upon the landscape, swirl and turn with the ever increasing breeze. Slowly, this breeze began to turn to a whipping wind, turning Zeljko's body into something more akin to a sail on a ship than a body. As the air around grew whiter, thick with shattered ice, the surrounding landscape became dark. Though his vision was impaired, his trek must continue.

He slammed against the onslaught of ice and air for what felt like hours, toward an illusion of safety. After an eternity and a few seconds, his illusion materialized.

The 1st panel shows a black screen with a small amount of light coming through the centre. Slowly, a snowy field is seen, with some mountains in the distance. The character gets up, and we see him in an aviator's jacket and cap, with brown hair hanging over his eyes. He brushes the snow off his chest, and looks down. We see a medium sized pack in the next panel, slightly further away from where he is standing. A white rabbit is eating some of the plant material inside of the pack. He shoos off the rabbit, and it hops backward. He opens the pack, and pulls out a letter. The next panels show him walking across the landscape, as snow picks up. The rabbit is following behind him. The text from the letter is displayed as these panels pass. The letter reads:

"*Hello! It's a pleasure to meet you again. I am you, or I was, at least. As you can see, I have made the executive decision to cross the forbidden barrier to the north! A stupid decision one may say, for no one has ever come out alive after an extended period of time. However, I disagree! Just because you lose your memory and ability to recount your experiences upon crossing doesn't mean anything to an adventurer such as myself. As is the way of the explorer!*

I assume you don't remember how you got here, or even who you are. If so, good! Everything is going according to plan. There should be enough food in your pack for the next 2 or so weeks or so, make sure to ration accordingly! I've also included some trinkets from home. Maybe they'll incite some memories. Who knows?!? Just remember, you've got nothing to return to, so don't even try it, buddy!

Good luck!

Zeljko."

The panels while the text is shown correspond with Zeljko looking in the pack to see the mostly eaten food and some trinkets. When the good luck text appears, he sees a small house through the rapidly falling snow. The house is relatively small and rectangular, having no elevated roof. It seems to be completely made out of concrete except for the metal door in the front. it is partially enclosed in ice, but the lock is found to be mostly decayed. Zeljko runs at the door like a quarterback, and it slams open. He closes the door behind the snowstorm outside. He walks into the space and slumps down against a wall. The white rabbit is at his feet. The room seems rather plain. the walls are concrete, and there is metal shelving everywhere. He gets up and looks in one of the bins. It seems like sand is in every one of the bins. He runs his fingers through some, and watches it drop back into the bin. Zeljko looks in the filing cabinet next. In the bottom drawer, there is a volleyball sized object with hexagons on the 4 axis points in different shades of purple. The hexagon on the top seems to be glowing. After the rabbit on the table presses the button, the puzzle complete jingle from deltarune plays (the notes on a musical measure are displayed on the page) The next panels display a transformation sequence, as the sand coming out of the boxes vortexes around the orb, lifting it up. Then, in a flash of light, HE APPEARS. He is in an x shaped pose in the air, with large bubble letters saying What's up Yo! Shinii falls to the ground and puts out his hand to a shocked Zeljko with the rabbit on his shoulders."Nice to meet'cha!" He says. Zeljko does not move. "What, dont'cha know how to greet your new friend?" Zeljko continues not to move. "Alright fine, let's take this slow, can't win 'em all. What's your name?" Shinii says. Zeljko jumps, realizing he had frozen. He rummages through his bag and finds the letter, pointing to his name. "Zel-j-kooooooo. ALRIGHTY THEN!" Shinii grabs both of Zeljko's hands vigorously. "It's a pleasure to meet'cha, Mr. Zeljko sir." He pauses for a moment. "Oh, and if you wouldn't mind tellin' me, how in the world did you get through the giant metal door?" Zeljko shrugs. Shinii leans against the table. "It must'a taken you forever to bust in 'ere, my master designed it 'imself! It couldn've been that long since he put me in sleep mode, just about…" He acts like hes checking a wristwatch, but a purple hologram appears out of it instead. displayed on it is 2,190,000. He pauses. His facial expression changes to one of being stunned. 'wh… six…" He freaks out with his hands on his head "SIX THOUSAND YEARS?!?" he grabs Zeljko by the shoulders. "In the name of Asimov, WHAT HAPPENED?" he doesn't respond. "Gah, whadda you know." The camera shifts to behind Zeljko's shoulders where we see Shinii on his knees. His head turns around and he says "AIGHT!" The camera shifts in front of Shinii, now standing up. "Somethin's up here and i don't like it one bit. If you're not gonna tell me what the deal is. I'm just gonna have to go and figure it out myself!" As he says this, Zeljko is sneaking out the door. Shinii looks behind him and says "OH NO YOU

DON'T"The camera shifts to outside the shed where Shinii grabs Zeljko's hoodie. The camera shifts in front of Zeljko's shoulder. "You're coming with me, buster." Shiini says, with a menacing face. Zelljko looks terrified. Shinii yoinks him inside in the next panel. He says, "besides…" The next panel is from Z's Perspective looking up at S who is extending a hand.."do ya wanna sit here and freeze, or are ya gonna help me save this world?" The next panel shows Z's hand hanging in front of S's, and the next finally grasping it."That's more like it!" Shinii walks toward the metal closet like structure, "Now that I've gotcha on board, check this out." He slowly cracks the doors as a large amount of light pours out. the next panels cut between it and Zeljko, becoming increasingly excited and illuminated. It cuts back to Shinii next to the closet with nothing inside. He looks very proud of himself. "Pretty awesome, right?" He appears stressed. "You don't look very impressed." "C'mon man, at least a nod would be niiiiiiiiohmygoditsgone" The panel changes in between the last word from Shinii looking into the closet to him freaking out in front of it. He kicks the closet as hard as his can. "NOT THIS AGAIN!" This surprisingly enough actually works."oh, cool." He turns around. "Ahem! This bad boy is… Steve!" the next panel cuts to a bored Zeljko. "It's an acronym for Super Transformative Epic V-flying Enabler." Shinii looks proud of himself. "I named it myself." Zeljko walks toward Steve. "My master made it on 'is own. it was initially a small project he started to travel out here quickly, but he ultimately discarded it due to waitwhatareyoudoing" (this text extends to the next panel where Zeljko leans backward into the closet) QUEUE TRANSFORMATION SEQUENCE! When this is finished, an awkward Zeljko stands while Shinii claps and says "that… was… AWESOME!" and thinks "that worked????!??!?!?!" Shinii runs toward the door. "Aight, let's take 'er for a go!" The next panel shows Shinii outside the door. he walks back in and drags Zeljko outside by his collar, again. "Alright, spread your wings and fly!" the panel changes to an utterly humiliated Zeljko. "oh right" is in the corner. "I'm the power source in Steve. so long as I'm connected, you should be flyin' fine." "I suppose we'll just have to give 'er a shot!" Queue second transformation sequence. "We're lookin' mighty fine today!" says Shinii. "what, feelin a little nervous? dont worry, just let me do all the flyin' for ya." "I've piloted this sucker like… zero times already. I'm plenty prepared!" "Oh don't be like that, we'll be fiiiine." "Next stop… uh, we'll figure that out when we get there!"

Document 5: Chapter 1 – Freezing Beginnings

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on December 26th, 2019.

Note: A rough concept for a Chapter 1 with a greentext in the middle. Odd, to say the least.

The chapter begins with a successful landing on the outskirts of the city. Shinii alerts you that the best way to enter the city without triggering alarms will be through a train station, and there is one in that general direction. Some mild platforming across the ice and concrete filled road later, and they arrive at the station. Shinii alerts you that they need a ticket to ride, but the machines are broken. There should be 1 ticket for the centre of the financial district laying on the ground, claiming it has no expiration date. It actually works, and they take the ride. This city only has one train line, so everything is connected. Later levels have many lines and stations. When they arrive in the centre of the district, it is in disrepair. Walking further into the district, the faint sound of clinking metal is heard, like a shopping cart's wheels. Z claims to feel like there's someone there, but S assures him that there couldn't possibly be a dangerous moving thing left in the city. The moment the text box closes, the sound of screeching wheels appears. A shopping cart decked out in some badass swag comes from behind does a few doughnuts around the 2, and stops in front of them. Hertig comes put from beneath his cape and announces something like

- flying, scene of snowy city below
- rough landing, toss and tumbles
- walk toward the train station across the torn up landscape
- serene train scene
- Hertig's first report
- offloads train, walks down the skyscraper lined street
- you meet hertig, he labels you as intruders
- team naming sequence
- kicks shopping cart down street
- he_cant_be_that_bad.jpeg
- introduces hertig's 7 trials of terror
- 1st trial: trial by fear. it's a dorky haunted house.
- 2nd trial: trial by mind. it's a 4 piece puzzle
- 3rd trial: trial by pain. chicken parm. its covered in hand sanitizer. my mouth feels terrible but nice
- 5th trial: trial by grief.
- 7th trial: unmarked. there is a piece of paper on the table. it says, “you lost the game”
- they lose the game, shinii is infuriated, crosses out lost and writes won
- hertig runs off
- scene of hertig reporting his findings

- now evening. queue “ive come to make an announcement”
- calls on his minions to attack
- now night time
- sneaking sequences
- fool minions, invade the castle
- the castle is actually just an italian restaurant
- an Italian food themed mech appears, Hertig EX “pizza, pasta, put it in my cockpit”
- battle
- trips mech with giant spaghetti
- they make up, hertig joins the party
- giant Italian dinner
- over dinner he mentions that his boss is coming to kill them
- hertig gives the gang access to his room of cool things and treasure
- gear up
- 03927 arrives
- beefier fight scene
- hertig puts pasta in her bike's muffler, battle won
- sentimental journey to the top of the tower
- tower A disabled, chapter complete
- short farewell bash
- chicken parm for the road, sauce included (hand sanitizer)
- liftoff for tower B

From inside the castle... it appears.
HERTIG EX
He seems to be inside some sort of larger, more clumsy mech version of himself; Hertig already being a large, clumsy robot. Where his glasses normally are, the windshield to a control room is visible. Hertig seems kind of... cramped in there. Can robots get fatter from eating too much? A comically large megaphone comes out of the top of the control room. "PIZZA, PASTA, PUT IT IN MY COCKPIT!" echoes between the skyscrapers.

Through the windows of the rail car, Zeljko sees a metropolis rise from the snow. Circular in shape with a large tower at the centre, the city appears like a post-modern stonehenge. Approaching the first ring of buildings, the train begins come to a stop at a rail station. The final abrupt halting of movement threw Zeljko on the ground, who had been holding onto the dangling loops the entire ride. With that, the heavy, sluggish doors slammed open. Shinii jumps up from their seat, running into the doorframe. "Welcome to !" they exclaim with delight. Nearly interrupting, the cracking of the overhead speaker began once again. "We have now arrived at Arhelm station. Thank you for riding Kapteyn Railway." Shinii gave the speaker a menacing glare. "It ain't the prettiest place in the world, but we aught to find someone here who can tell us what's going on."

Document 6: Chapter 3 – A Sun Rises Above Treetops

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on April 2nd, 2019.

Note: A rough concept for the third chapter. I have no clue where the second went!

Climate of this area is much different than the previous, being a more temperate forest environment. The area in which you first land seems to be reminiscent of the redwood forests of Washington. However, the centre of the story will take place to Tower C. Unlike some of the other towers, Tower C seems to be more remote than the others, with no large city surrounding it. However, it has some inhabitants who are making good use of its energy. The town's buildings are styled like traditional Japanese temples and related structures, intertwining in the large redwood trees. These buildings and large trees directly surround the tower, like due to the creators of the town (robots) feeding off its energy. The town was built entirely by robots after the demise of what was the human civilization. It seems like they congregated there due to the collapse of the power grid in outlying cities which sourced from that particular tower.

The main plot point of this section of story is the upcoming festival of the 17th centennial supposedly being sabotaged. the queen asks the 3 protags to find the terrorists working for the mysterious villain. it is a complete bluff, as the queen was leading them into an elaborate trap. as soon as you build up the utmost trust with her, she betrays you, leading zeljko as the sacrificial living being to the gods. felix is repaired and saves zeljko. beat the shit outta the queen. leave.

You arrive on the ground below, away from the tower. the faint sound of footsteps can be heard. as the party makes their way towards the tower, a fruit falls directly on shinii’s head. they know something is up in the treetops above. eventually, a dangling ladder is seen hanging down from the trees. after climbing up, the view of the city is seen from the area just outside of the main economic centre, think of like the view of new york city from the ocean. the buildings are directly intertwined with the trees, so there are no real “skyscrapers” in the sense we would think of them. a market is visible from the platform they arise on. food is being prepared, different complex objects are being created. one stand is throwing the excess fruit behind them, onto the first floor. shinii gets mega Angry. and yells at the shopkeeper for possibly injuring those on the ground. the citizens around get ecstatic, for new folks haven't come for hundreds of years. they get sent directly to the capitol building of the city to speak with the mayor regarding immigration. there, they meet the mayor. the party presents its issue regarding finding the answer to the disappearance of the colony to the mayor. the mayor says that they may have the answers they seek in the library, but the party will have to complete a quest for her before she will unlock the library. the party will have to eliminate the infidels in the city trying to ruin the 17th centennial festival for the citizens. the group executing this has a banner on their door. they all agree, with Zeljko more being compliant with the others than anything else. the mayor gives directions to the 3 on where their hideouts are expected to be. they travel to the first, in the dark

alleyways of the economic district. they walk in this bar-like environment first. there is one singular bartender and a few customers present. the party believes that the address the queen gave them was wrong, and walks inside. shinii kicks up conversation with the bartender, and he mentions that they are the group the mayor wants eliminated. upon hearing this, shinii uses their razor thread attack to make sure no one can move. after an intense interview with the bartender, they get the location of the other main hideout specifically.

Document 7: Chapter 4 – A Dreamlike State

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on September 8th, 2019.

Note: A more fleshed out concept for a fourth chapter.

Kaeti stays in the treetop forest to help manage reconstruction, Zeljko, Shinii, and Felix go ahead to the next tower. Rerouted due to dangerous equipment between there and the next location. Equipment is more powerful than expected, Zeljko and subsequently Shinii are shot out of the sky (they travel together as one entity). Felix cannot catch them, they fall into the lake. The Simulator does his schpeel, queue fade in to the 1st locale, Clockwork Cavern. You wake up with Christian, Shinii and him have their dialogue. Anastasia Liutprand makes her entrance, and after some dialogue explaining why you're here and her noticing the shattered STEVE, she agrees to lend her assistance to your cause. However, you must get some parts for her to fix the issues in the STEVE. The 1st would be a highly concentrated lens which was at the royal astronomical observatory of Clockwork Castle. The 2nd is finely created wires, basically fiber optic cables, available from the village of Bordemer. The last would be a nuclear powered core available from Washington City. you're given directions to the castle, and set off.

At the end of Chapter 3, Kaeti said she would stay behind for a few days to monitor the progress they made in the village. Zeljko and Shinii would go ahead to the next tower to scout out the area. Due to military equipment littering the area between Tower C and Tower D, Kaeti reroutes the duo over a lake where the idle equipment should have no chance of impacting them. However, while they are flying over the lake, Zeljko and Shinii are hit with a powerful laser knocking Zeljko unconscious and damaging the equipment's ability to fly. They plummet out of the sky towards the surface of the lake. Upon reaching it, it shatters like a glass rainbow sending the two into a dark void of black. A low rumble can be heard in the distance, and eventually a deep voice begins to transmit. A huge hand catches them, still unconscious falling. The Simulator begins to speak.

"Ah, it seems I have visitors. Visitors, visitors. What day did I have a visitor last?… I do not recall. These beings, who may they be? Ah, the first… a human. Anxious, stressed, determined to change. A fundamentally fractured and flawed being. I wonder if he would feel the same. Second… an artificial creation. Oh… what's this? This inanimate creation… it seems to have the spirit of a living being. I've never witnessed something akin to the likes of this before. How interesting, what a dynamic. So, so very interesting. This duo, this wonderful pair, I have a place for them. They will rest among my children, my stars. Welcome home, wanderers."

The blackness behind opens to an eye, the main body of The Simulator. The large hand fades, and they drop further into the black. At this point they exit through what seems like a jelly like membrane and drop like in air. A starry sky appears, with slight aurora in the sky. A European styled town with church styled architecture glows in the night below with a large

clocktower standing tall at the centre. Their decent continues until crashing through the ceiling of the backroom of a clockworking shop in a pile of hay. The camera pans upward to show the grid of the night time town, surrounded by water.

The page begins from the 1st person perspective of Zeljko opening his eyes. The room he awakens inside is made of dark wooden planks, with copper parts in tin bins and very specialized tools, seemingly haphazardly discarded around the room. His armor lay in the corner, looking extremely damaged from the fall. Old maps can be seen displayed on the walls of the room, at least where there aren't shelves of copper and other miscellaneous parts. The maps are in a script he can't read, displaying land masses he has never seen. Large windows on either side of the walls stream in the blinding sunlight which illuminates the space. Only then did Zeljko notice a small boy with jet black hair sitting in a chair reading what looked to be the morning paper. He adorned a dark brown vest above his button down white polo, while the lower half of him displays light tan khakis with too many pockets to count, and well worn boots. On his head is a navy blue bowlers cap, one which has definitely seen its fair share of days on the top of a head. However, the part that stands out most about this boy to Zeljko is his watch, glinting gold from the sunlight coming through the windows. The curvature, materials, color, and intricate parts all culminated in the design which was displayed on the boy's lap. The chair he sits on is so intricately made, with designs running up the arms carved into wood, and a tan hued wool cushion. Zeljko wonders what story they could tell. The small boy finally glances up, and has a mini panic attack."Oh my stars, you're awake!" he says, rushing up from his seat, discarding the paper he was reading to the side. Zeljko tries to move himself up from the hay, and the boy immediately stops him from doing so. He exclaims, "No! Please stop, you've fallen from the heavens practically!" Zeljko tries to ask him a question, but does not manage to stammer out a word. The boy, still in the midst of his panic attack, has a realization, "My, you haven't had anything to drink in ages, no wonder you can not speak. Please, do not move from this spot!" The boy scrambles out of the door, slamming it unnecessarily hard as he leaves.

Zeljko ponders his existence for a moment, and finally remembers something slightly important, where had Shinii gone? Now it was Zeljko's turn to have a panic attack, as he frantically turned his neck looking for any sign of him. As Zeljko succumbs to the realization Shinii is gone, he just waltzes in the room like nothing was wrong, carrying 2 mugs of a dark brown substance. "You're finally awake. Seems like you were out for hours." Shinii looks around the shed. "By my creator, this place looks even more like a dump by day than at night." He places the mug near Zeljko. "Here, Christiann made this for you." He gives Shinii a puzzling look. you haven't met Christiann yet?" Shinii asks. He yells out "CHRISTIANN! DID YA MEET ZELJKO YET?" The voice of the boy responds back "YES, I DID!" Christiann comes running into the shed yet again. "Your cocoa! Are you enjoying it?" he asks. Zeljko nods approvingly. Christiann whispers loudly to Shinii, "Why is he not replying?" "Ah," Shinii replies, "he doesn't say much. Well, that's a lie, actually. He hasn't said anything at all since I've met 'im." Christiann seems baffled by this, exclaiming "You can not just *stop* speaking to

people," he turns toward Zeljko and grabs him by the collar. "***How do you do it?***" Zeljko does the shrug emote gesture, and Christiann backs off, realizing his mistake. "I am so sorry. Sometimes I get a little… over excited." "You're more than alright, just answer some questions for us wouldya?" asked Shinii. "Why of course!" he responds, pulling up another chair from against a wall. He sits down in it backwards. "Alrighty," Shinii puts out his hand, and a purple hued hologram of a map of the entirety of the land inside of the barrier appears. He zooms into the area around where they were initially traveling. "We were travellin' in this direction," a line appears from Tower C to Tower D, "n' we were shot outta the sky right here," an X appears where they fell. "So, that means we *should* be drownin' in a lake right now. But," he gestures around the room, "it sure don't look like we're in the bottom of a lake. Do you recognize *anything* on this map?" Christiann looks puzzled and slightly hazed at the map. "N-no, I don't believe so." he says. Shinii sighs, and puts his face in his hands. "What kinda pickle have we gotten ourselves stuck into this time 'round." "W-well," Christiann stammers, "my master can help for sure! She comes to work later in the morning at..." he looks at his watch. "Well, a few minutes ago, actually. She's always on time for opening, something must be wrong. I'll have a look outside." He begins to get up from his chair. "I'll come along. gotta make a good impression y'know?" Shinii says. Since he is closer to the door than Christiann, Shinii reaches it first. A panel shows Shinii reaching for the door saying "I'm excited to meet your master," In the next panel, the camera is from the perspective of a tall person from outside the door. Shinii says "I'm sure she's real…" The next panel shows him looking up in shock. "...nice…" Particles shoot all over the shed as a 2x4 is shown splitting through Shinii's mutilated body. Zeljko and Christiann stare on in disbelief. A tall, muscular woman woman steps in the door holding a now broken 2x4. She has short, spiked brown hair, with blue eyes. Her smithing uniform is on, with tattered rag-like tan cloth and black overalls.

Document 8: Chapter 5 – Eternal Life

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on April 17th, 2019.

Note: A rough concept for a fifth chapter.

The duo make their touchdown in a humid swamp like environment, which appears like a drier Everglades. Using their radar given by Kaeti, they make their way towards this supposed power source. However, something seems quite off. The usual towering structure which houses the power source cannot be seen. They make the conclusion that this specific place has a new type of source due to the environment. Shinii makes remarks that this will ever so easy it is akin to a picnic in the swamp. When they were supposed to have almost reached the source, our duo comes upon an office building like structure which us extremely worn. Zeljko makes the correct conclusion that the power source must be inside. Stepping inside the hole where the sliding glass doors presumably were, reveals what looks like a very futuristic lobby which has been left to decay. Shinii makes out the words “MS Laboratories" scrawled in the ancient text on the wall. They instantly recognize these names from the entires in news articles, ebooks, smalltalk, and propaganda they have read so far on their journey. The extent of their knowledge is of their affiliation with the government of the ancients and the closure of the lab after a freak accident, killing hundreds instantly. However, these stories did not match at all clearly with what they were observing, as the lab was still there (or as there as it could be after 20 thousand some years.) This leads Zeljko to believe this is a corruption coverup, and the people "killed" were merely yellow journalism to get a foothold on the political opponent. Venturing further into the lab, it appeared to have been completely looted or evacuated, nearly nothing was left in the huge rooms that were presumably workplaces. After exploring the perimeter, they agreed to move further closer the the centre where sunlight would not reach. Shinii uses his light to illuminate the way into the centre. They find fancy office buildings, conference rooms, spaces where cubicles used to lie, a break room. Everything seemed completely normal. Then, Zeljko sees something from the corner of his eye, a tiny purple light flying out from under the door, and then immediately back under. This door did not seem extremely special, but it was the only one which was locked. Shinii busted down the door to find a long corridor in pitch black. They walked down this corridor side by side, their feet squeaking and splashing from the water on the ground. As they move down the corridor, Zeljko and Shinii see a larger and larger number of these purple lights. At maximum there were only 2-3 on screen at once. They cannot touch them, or even disturb them by moving the air in which they float. Eventually, Zeljko runs head first into a large safe-like door at the end of the hallway. It appeared as if something was stuck to his head. Zeljko, expecting it to be a spider web, tried to brush it off. However, it was dark purple almost to black, sticky, and slightly warm. Zeljko jumped back in horror, as Shinii asked what was the issue. Zeljko makes a snarky comment about how he just ran into a wall, and that maybe if he pointed his light forwards it wouldn't have happened. Shinii points his light forward, groaning

about the trouble, and this giant metal door with a huge safe dial on it is in front of them. This dark purple substance is coming out of all sides of the door, busting through what is seemingly a climate controlled area. They observe a few purple orbs coming out of the door as well. Shinii immediately gets spooked, unlike the other situations they have encountered so far. Zeljko is the one wanting to open the door. To lighten the mood, Shinii jokingly calls them pixies, and the name sticks. Shinii pleads him to resist, arguing that whatever is sealed inside could cause irreversible harm to the ecosystem and possibly their lives. Zeljko ignores Shinii, brushing him off with the argument that if it hadn't escaped by them, then it wouldnt cause any harm. Zeljko points out that the color of the material is purple, the color of all of the power sources. He says that the power source MUST be inside. Shinii asked if he could just reroute them to a different tower with some help from Kaeti. Zeljko doesnt respond. Shinii continues pleading with him, beginning to sound earnestly worried (most likely for the health of Zeljko). Zeljko begins backing away from the door. Shinii acknowledge this, and congratulates him on having a brain in his head. Then, Zeljko charges forward at the door. Shinii screams "no no Zeljko NO NOOO" as Zeljko uses his boosters to blow the door down. It flies of it's frame into the corridor ahead. Pixies dart everywhere, like angry bees before all descending back into the corridor. S falls onto their knees and yells "what have you DONE! WE CAN'T LEAVE THIS NOW." Z stands completely still, emotionless. S walks up and punches Z in the chest and half encouraging tells him to pick up the pace, walking into the interior of the lab. When they have entered this new corridor, the walls radiate a deep purple glow on their own, everything is made of this substance. Below it however, Z makes out the white walls of the laboratory which came before. Stalagmites and stalagtites of this material are hanging from the ceiling and floor. They immediately recognize the labyrinth structure of the lab, and S uses Kaeti's mapping tool to make sure they never loose track of locations. The pixies dart all around like mosquitoes in the Floridian summer. Z notices some pixies emerging directly from the material on the walls like a lava lamp. At this moment, Z has the realization that this purple material isnt some harmful chemicals from a spill or something of the like. *it's alive.* He yells out a brief scream, calling for S. He stutters upon himself, eventually telling S his realization. S has a mini panic attack, trying to scrape the goo off his shoes. They continue down the hall, which seems to extend for a good portion of a kilometer. Eventually they see a door-shaoed spot under the purple, and with a little encouragement with Z's shoulder it gives. The moment the door opens an organism runs out of the room. It had a flat shaped body about 5 inches across and 3 wide, and roughly 3/4 inch thick. It had 4 apparent appendages, and a head on a rather long neck. The pair become increasingly dreadful. Inside the room was computing terminals and some more basic lab equipment. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary at first (besides the purple residue everywhere) but upon further inspection by Z the lights in the room lit and the computers awakened. All of the computers asked for an admin password login, except for a smaller portable one, just larger than Z's hand and see through. It was not locked, and had access to the lab's network. They found a copy of the project file dumped without a password, and read a portion.

Document 9: Project Enma Journal Entries

Created on March 6th, 2019. Last Modified on April 22nd, 2019.

Note: A series of journal entries made by a scientist on a "Project Enma". Unfortunately, I don't remember anything about this concept, or I would comment more!

Project Enma: Entry 001. Day 001. Project Member: 0002.

Today we have been given yet another project by the legislators. It seems they have a desire to eliminate those who escaped across the barrier before it was erected… we have no choice but to follow their orders. The instructions we were given? Create a humane and efficient way to kill human beings, that can be activated with a trigger. All we can do is begin work on the project now, it can't be helped.

Project Enma: Entry 002. Day 003. Project Member: 0002.

Me and the others in the association have decided on the final concept for our project. In order to create a device which cannot be found and triggered remotely, we have decided on a self replicating nanobot network. These incredibly small robots would be able to spread extremely rapidly across a population, and with the press of a button, all would simultaneously activate. When activated, the nanobots would release lethal enzymes into the body, breaking down DNA and ultimately dissolving the host. Part of this process shuts down processes in the brain immediately, causing no pain or trauma to those infected. Such a gruesome way to die, but ultimately painless… I feel like this is a good metaphor for something.

Project Enma: Entry 003. Day 004. Project Member: 0002.

We're trying to save their memories. All of them. The least we can do is record and preserve. In a way, recordings have the power to raise the dead. It's kind of scary. We'll put them all in an archive. One singular entity. It will be preserved for all time. This way, no one will truly have died. Like the preserving of a book which has been written hundreds of years ago, their words, their actions, their desires, their **stories** will be embalmed in a silicone tomb.

Document 10: A Little Bit of Background

Created on March 18th, 2019. *Last Modified on May 1st, 2019.*

Note: This appears to be an updated backstory to the events of the novel, and the first mention of a character named "Alyssa".

In the year 21XX, 2 thousand brave explorers embarked on the journey of a lifetime. Their vessel, the USS Alyssa, dispatched from a Lunar spaceport to arrive at their destination, Kapteyn B, a exoplanet 12.8 light years away. Despite the advanced technology in their ship, it would take just over 3,000 years to reach their destination. This was quite possibly the fastest speed they could travel, considering that you still have to slow down before reaching Kapteyn B. Cryogenic sleep helped alleviate worries of wasting away on a ship, headed to a destination the passengers would never see, but it owed a great risk. Only 50 souls of the 2,000 were still functional after arriving at the destination. The toll of such a long journey was too tough on the bodies of the travelers. With the help of their robotic partners and the untouched frozen embryos brought from Earth, the colonist population was quickly replenished, and colonization of the planet below began.

A rapidly exploding population on the ground, in tandem with booming cities and towns growing as fast as their robot constructors could move, brought extremely poor living conditions to most inhabitants. These inhabitants started looking across the sea and over the north pole to more spacious lands where the colonist government would have no say in their matters. Due to "environmental concerns" but mostly wanting to keep all people under their control, the colonist government quickly consulted their head scientists to create a barrier, one which wasn't a physical wall, but would affect you so deeply no one would ever cross. What they created was a feat of technology; a barrier which would destroy all your memories upon crossing it, and prevent you from reciting any memories contained while on the other side. This prevented any possible pull factors from ever arising from outside the walls. Even if some rogue explorer were to exit the colony and still contain their integrity and sense of mission after crossing, they could not even report back to people on the other side of what they had found. The effects of the barrier worked on those coming in and out, so that the treasonous people who left the colony could not come back, and perish outside. Most did.

Nearly immediately after the construction of the barrier, the head scientists were given another mission by the government. It was to create an artificial disease which would spread extremely rapidly across a populace, and be able to instantly annihilate all infected with the press of a button. The reason for this incredibly dangerous invention, was cited by government of the colony to be the only "humane" way to eliminate the surviving treasonous colonists who had set up a village outside of the barrier before it was erected. The project was completed, and the nanobots were dropped on the village. The scientists recommended initiating the bots before the ship carrying the nanobots landed back at port, but the government insisted that they waited to

secure the villagers' ultimate destruction. After waiting a month to ensure every member of the village was infected, the government finally gave the go ahead to the scientists to initiate the nanobots.

Every living human being on the Kapteyn B died that day.

Or so it was thought.

2 groups of people survived the nanobot attack, or what was referred to as "The Event" in the histories of the day; A ragtag group of rogue people who crossed the barrier before the drop of the nanobots, and a select number of the colonist scientists who had been given the "cure" for the bots.

The rogue group of people who left the colony were the initial group which sparked the growth of a new human population, which grew to over 3.5 billion individuals 9,000 years after The Event. These people inhabited all continents outside of the barrier, having to work up civilization from nearly ground zero, due to the group from the colony losing their memories. Anything that wasn't instinctual had been erased from their memories.

The scientists only lasted a few decades before all perishing. Secluded in their lab, they were busy testing how to find eternal life so that the members who had survived would be able to rule in this empty world for as long as their hearts desired. They got their wish of eternal life, but not in the way they may have wanted.

These scientists were important in another, much more significant way, however. They docked the USS Alyssa, the giant spacecraft the colonists arrived in, to the main port on the space elevator above the capitol. They completely stripped and renovated it for the interior to look like an old, gothic library. Contained inside were artifacts to their short-lived but mighty civilization. There are histories of Earth and their doings on Kapteyn B, artifacts to how they lived and worked. Trillions of images, video, sounds, and other experiences which embodied their entire existence. Think of it like backing up the entire internet, and all once living people's recorded experiences to one singular location. They had many physical copies of important data, but almost all of it was stored inside The Archivor. Even though The Archivor was well equipped to defend itself, they created another, more sentient robot to take care of the Library, The Librarian. (The scientists were terrible at naming things, good lord.) One of the more creative minds at the lab nicknamed her Alyssa, after the former name of the ship the library was created in.

Reusing the technology the frozen embryos were stored in when carried over to Kapteyn B, the scientists created a nursery for Alyssa to tend to as well. There she would raise human children hatched from the embryo systems, and teach them to be the most optimal human beings she could manage to produce. The scientists gave her 1 simple task. When they had all died, Alyssa was to lead the new, perfect humans down onto Kapteyn B to create an incorruptible society on top of the old. Unfortunately, due to their "success" in achieving immortality, 1

scientist never truly died. Alyssa was never able to lead all of her students down to the surface, per the instructions given to her. For the 9,000 years between The Event and and the start of our story, she taught her students as best she could, and at the age of 16 they would be judged. Those who she saw in her eyes to be perfect would pass, the others would be "dismissed". The humans who passed were given the title of "Scholar", and given specialized education per their interests in preparation for their assumed return to the surface during their lifetime. This never came.

Alyssa enjoyed watching the new civilization spawned by the rogue peoples rise outside of the borders of the old colony. As their sprawling cities and cultures stretched further towards the barrier (which it's furthest north point was directly at the north magnetic pole) she dispatched some of her Scholars to the surface to find what artificial, sentient units may be left in the colony below. Any fairly sentient being would be given a direct link to one of Alyssa's scholars, and told to report on any signs of humans successfully coming through the barrier, and not wandering back through or dying. In the most northeastern sector of the colony, one such sentient being was a ragtag leader of what was basically a group of roombas, Hertig. 9,000 years after the event, he spotted something peculiar. Whoever could it be…

Document 11: Smash Movesets

Created on April 19th, 2019. *Last Modified on April 22nd, 2019.*

Note: What appears to be a "Super Smash Brothers" moveset for the character Kaeti.

Kaeti

A: Right Punch
AA: Left Punch
AAA: Uppercut
A Side: more powerful punch
A Dash: jumps toward opponent with a downward double fisted slam
A Down: Brings both fists down on opponent's head, small chance of burying opponent

A Up: rainbow punch above head.

Air Neutral: helicopter like punch, rotates around
Air Forward: front punch, same measure
Air Back: back punch, p much k rools nair lmao
Air Up: A heavy kick in the air, upward roundhouse
Air Down: throws wrench downwards

Grab: A less long forearm detachment than up b

Grab A: punch repeatedly
Throw Forward: rotate around, throws forward
Throw Back: rotate around, throws backwards
Throw Up: jumps up, slams into ground
Throw Down:

B: change forearms. 5 different options. default (boxing or shop gloves), balanced. drill, higher damage but less knockback, lowers defence. saws, higher knockback but less damage lowers defence. sheilds, raises defence but lowers attack. speed, raises speed in running and attacking by a reasonable percentage, lowers both attack and speed a little.
Side B: Charge punch, holds charge after finished
Up B: Forearm detaches, used as grappling hook
Down B: Counter, uses small expandable shield on forearms by crossing them

Final Smash: Summons BoxBot-U, kick ass by controlling it for a while

Up Taunt: Boxing outfit: flips glove over head onto hand. Shop outfit: flips wrench
Side Taunt: Flex
Down Taunt: Break dances, stays in final position as long as you hold down button

Assist Trophies

- Obse: Healing
- BoxBot-0001: Take damage when you run into it
- BoxBot-00027: Beats people up

Stage

- The ring with machine shop machinery as stage hazards

Alt colors

- Traditional colors boxing
- Traditional colors machine shop
- Shinii colors boxing
- Zeljko colors machine shop
- gearless joe colors boxing
- Alyssa colors machine shop
- monochrome colors boxing

Document 12: Let's Take It From The Top

Created on April 21st, 2019. *Last Modified on April 25th, 2019.*

Note: A question and answer session on Twitter regarding the story which was recorded in text.

What's this story about anyways?

- In short, Forgotten Dreams details the journey of a boy and the friends and foes he meets on their quest to figure out what happened to the abandoned civilization they reside inside.

Who is this boy?

- Our main protagonist is named Zeljko. He lost his memory entering this enclosed civilization, and can only rely on his experiences from inside this area to help him along his way. He is more or less powerless, being mute as well as weaponless. It is his allies rallying behind his smarts which propel the story along.

Enclosed? By what?

- This civilization is enclosed by a barrier. It's not like a wall where you physically cannot cross, but is completely permeable. The catch is that once you cross this barrier, your memories are erased. It is also impossible to state your experiences from after crossing this barrier. In effect, this puts our protagonist in a pickle where he cannot remember his past, nor recount any experience he has had inside of this barrier, effectively making him mute.

Who built these structures?

- Well that's about what we're trying to figure out, innit.

Who is working against our protagonists?

- There is usually a local power that has to be taken care of in every locale they enter. For example, in the first chapter, a quite annoying sentient dishwasher has a grudge against our protagonists. In chapter 2, the leader of a machine shop who has a fondness for boxing attempts to stop them in their tracks.

As for a sort of a central leadership?

- They know that there is one, it has links to each antagonist they've seen, and it's out to stop them as well. They have a rough idea of where this power is located, at the old

capital of the lost civilization. The problem is actually putting a face on this power. They seem to be extremely secretive, as neither antagonists in chapter 1 or 2 know who or what the leader of this organization is.

Where are our protagonists heading?

- They're following a trail to the capitol, mostly by train. It would be easy to just take the A train to Generic Capitol City, but unfortunately this central power seems to have the whole place locked down. Shinii believes that there must be an external power source to shut down this barrier, so the party is trying different spots marked on Shinii's map as important, places detailed in the journals they find scattered across the landscape, or placed told to them by trustworthy others to attempt to unlock this barrier.

Great, now who is Shinii?

- Zeljko meets Shinii almost immediately after the story begins. Zeljko found a storage facility by pure fluke in the middle of this massive snowy wasteland he was hopelessly wandering across. Inside of this facility, Zeljko accidentally awakens Shinii. Shinii is a robot, or rather robots. They are a collection of microbots, all moving together in sync with Shinii's core. The core is basically the brain of the whole operation, while the microbots do all the heavy lifting. In this way, Shinii can morph into quite literally anything they want, constraining of course to the laws of the universe and the mass of microbots they currently possess. Each microbot has to be linked to the core either directly or indirectly through other microbots, so having untethered appendages isn't an option for them. This still leaves quite a bit of leeway, and as long as Shinii can have a 1 microbot link between an appendage and the core, it can be easily controlled. This is how Zeljko can actually defend himself, through weapons and defense actually powered through Shinii. They help power and enhance the weapons and defences of Kaeti and FELIX as well.

MORE CHARACTERS???

- Alright alright, these are our last 2 protagonists.
- Kaeti is the antagonist of chapter 2, but after Zeljko and Shinii kick the butts of her robots, she begrudgingly joins the party. Kaeti is both a mechanic and a boxer, creating her own opponents to face in the ring. She is also a robot, and carries with her a bulk of technical skill. She's the muscle of the party, at least in comparison to the others.
- FELIX is yet again another robot, but appears vastly different from the commonly taken humanoid forms of Shinii and Kaeti. FELIX, in the ancient language its name was created in, stood for the acronym Feelings, Emotion, and Love for Internal, eXperiments. FELIX appears to be thousands of years older than almost anything else the party has

encountered up to this point, having the relative processing power of a lump of silicon on the ground. Despite this, FELIX is still a vastly integral member of the party (but we're still trying to figure out what exactly it is integral to).

Where on Earth is this story located in?

- Not Earth, but a completely new planet about 13 light years away, going by the name Kapetyn b. I actually designed the surface of this planet by hand, and with the help of a good Roman usurper friend of mine I was able to find the climates at every location on this planet, allowing me to do some pretty realistic world building. The story takes place on a continent mostly in the northern hemisphere of this world, and stretches just below the equator at its southernmost point. Like the bottom 2/3rds of Africa, it is much more long than it is wide. Our journey begins just across the barrier, which stretches just before the north pole of this planet. The continent actually goes directly over the north pole, and stretches down into more livable areas past the arctic circle. Presumably, this is where Zeljko came from. The Capitol is toward the south, situated on a pointy peninsula. Due to the vastly varying latitudes the party crosses, the environments they trek across are vibrant and highly varied.

Okay, so how does the Earth play into this anyhow?

- Everything up until August 1995 is completely canon in this universe. After that date, things go a little haywire in my little cinematic universe. Just for a little perspective, the events in this story happen roughly 12,000 years after that date. I know, it seems a bit of a stretch, but interstellar travel and the buildup of a civilization from a couple dozen people takes some time.

Document 13: Whiteout

Created on April 18th, 2019. Last Modified on May 13th, 2019.

Note: A backstory to the backstory. Really going deep with this one! Although this document was created in April, this specific story is much older than that, going back to my childhood. I believe I spun this story to become the point which begins the Forgotten Dreams timeline. As a kid growing up in Florida, the state freezing over was a wonderful fantasy. I'm not sure why I picked Bradenton to be the location for this story though… I must have picked it randomly.

Premise: On August 27th, 1994, the world was turned upside down. Well, not upside down to be exact, but quite off axis. The north pole changed position to somewhere over a place which doesn't matter, otherwise known as Monroe, Louisiana, due to a small black hole flying through the solar system. A ragtag group of 3 10-11 year olds, an older brother of 18 years old, and his bipedal robot attempt to get somewhere just a little warmer than Bradenton, Florida.

Path of the Story:

- -Characters:
  - -Carson Palmer: Male, 10
    - Location: Bradenton, Florida
    - School: Middle School, 6th Grade
    - Personality Type- INFJ
    -
  - -Dahlia Fields: Female, 10
    - Personality Type- INFP
    - Dahlia tends to be more of a support member of the group. While she does not directly accomplish most tasks, she learns quickly and adapts to situations well.
  - -Anthony Flynn: Male, 11
    - Personality Type- INTJ
    -
  - -Shaun Palmer: Male, 18
    - Location: Bradenton, Florida
    - School: High School, 12th Grade
    - Personality Type- ISTP

- -FELIX: Robot, ???
  - Location: Bradenton, Florida
  - School: Palmetto High School, does not attend classes, simply created there.
  - Personality Type- INFP
  - FELIX (Feelings, Emotions, and Love for Internal eXperiments) is a bipedal robot created by Shaun in his free time over the course of a year from August 1991 to September 1992. FELIX uses the SNES (Super Nintendo Entertainment System) as his electronic "brain", mostly because it was the only expendable programmable device Shaun had lying around at the time of Felix's construction. Due to the hardware limitations of the SNES, for FELIX to be used for more than one task you must swap cartridges every time he is used for a complex task. Despite this, FELIX's memory of events is not distorted by the change of the cartridge, but it is rather like he is obtaining a new skillset that he instantly forgets apon removal of the cartridge. FELIX is powered by 2 sources, a set of solar panels which can be unfolded apon his backside, and an RTG (Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator) which is contained near his center. No one has had the guts to ask Shaun where he got it from yet.This RTG gives off a considerable amount of heat, and you may break a sweat when he is in a small room with you for a while. To prevent excess heat on his components, Shaun placed a fan on FELIX's backside which also doubles as an extremely efficient space heater in the winter months. As a display to easily let FELIX display his emotions, Shaun made the worthy sacrafice of his CRT to use as his head. FELIX's body had to be slightly tweaked in strength to hold the weight of the television, but it turned out for the better, as he appears to be much cuter this way.
  - FELIX's name was not originally an acronym. Ironically, the meaning of the name was established later on in his life. This change to an acronym occurred a few months after he was booted up for the first time, as Shaun noticed FELIX

Document 14: The Disk

Created on May 27th, 2019. Last Modified on October 30th, 2019.

Note: A poem I wrote about Leviathans. This one is so bad it's good.

The Disk

The husk of a leviathan sulks through the void.

There was nothing left to consume, nothing left to harvest. They had taken everything.

And so, the leviathan waited.

Suddenly, it stopped waiting.

A small object floating amongst the void entered its view.

And such, the leviathan and its companion continued to drift.

The leviathan could harvest it, like the millions of other objects it had done the same to.

Or, maybe, as a momento to the last of it all, the leviathan could keep it.

'Yes', it thought, 'this one is mine to keep.'

On its side, a circular section of the item glinted in the dimming light of the leviathan.

Barely able to move, it interpreted this disk.

With every instruction inscribed meticulously followed, the leviathan prepared to do it's final duty.

Slowly, it turned the disk.

'What's this?', the leviathan pondered.

Snapshots of instances all flooded its sensors. New feelings, foreign to something as cold as a harvester of worlds, entered it's husk.

Suddenly, something new began. Across trillions of eons, the murmurs of Earth were heard once more.

The dreams of a civilization were no longer forgotten.

The leviathan felt content, and fell inanimate with the sounds of the disk.

The disk turned, and turned, and turned, and stopped.

Then, nothing happened.

And it kept not happening.

Forever.

Document 15: Machinations of the Mao

Created on May 4th, 2019. Last Modified on May 4th, 2019.

Note: This lore appears here and nowhere else. If you told me I had wrote this possessed and drunk at the same time I'd believe you.

Backstory to Setting

During the experimentation of the scientists following The Event, one small agricultural town on the west coast of Colony had an explosion in it's population of cats. A scientist on a train which passed stations through this area found the huge population of cats. Violating the Geneva convention, this scientist began to tinker with some members of the huge population of felines. They tested genetic modification, mechanical integration, and other such additions to the cats. Before any significant conclusions could be made about the success of the experiments, some "complications" permanently delayed them. However, what had been done was enough to push the breaking point.

The first feline to gain sentience was named NKO-00298, 298 for short. She was a direct descendant of one of the genetically modified felines, giving it a larger cranium and higher chance for mutation among its children. 298 looked at the stars, and a revelation came upon her. What was the place of each feline, and what was the place of herself? Was life all supposed to be about survival and reproduction, or was there more? It was this that lead 298 to change a population of feral animals into a thriving civilization.

Nearly 9,000 years after this occurrence, several bustling metropolises have been built along the west coast. The severe climate and ocean that separates the west and east prevented the cats from crossing outside of this area. It would be possible for them to do so with the more modern technologies they had developed, but religion is so ingrained into their society that it actively dissuaded anyone from crossing and returning. The principal city, the one which is larger than all others, is Mao City. It was built upon the ruins of a city created by colonists, so it retained the structures humans built. The felines could never gain the ability to build such colossal structures as the humans did, but they did use the existing buildings to their fullest extent. Built on, around, and inside of these buildings are the residencies and businesses of the felines themselves. All of their large cities function this way. Agricultural towns and other hard labor sectors are not based off of human cities, but are completely original.

The architecture in these cities is fairly ragtag, with most things built from scraps. Cat tropes from different cultures are applied heavily in their architecture. They presumably knew about these tropes from observing them directly- through the media left behind by the humans. These recordings and stories are kept in a large temple in Mao City dedicated to the ancients. Their technology levels are close modern (like today modern, not current day in Forgotten Dreams modern) with most technology we know today. However, flight and rocketry have not

been achieved, neither has most scientific intricate knowledge. Most of what the cats know have been directly taken from humans, not by their own discovery. They know somewhat how make it, and what it does, but not how it works.

The religion here is fairly reminiscent of eastern religions. They worship gods and idols, but they're real physical beings and objects from the ancient times. Examples of relics are Garfield comic strips, Keyboard cat, Egyption cat relics, etc.

Character Backstory

The main character is a cat working for the government of Mao in their scientific team. The people of Mao have been being provoked by the outsiders (which is actually Alyssa just trying to get in contact with the folks, the government of Mao won’t even let in an ambassador) and their scientific team is attempting to create a super weapon to defeat them.

Document 16: Blight of the Immortals

Created on May 19th, 2019. Last Modified on June 29th, 2019.

Note: I believe this was supposed to be a draft for a second book. I was way ahead of myself.

Very Brief Summary

Zeljko and Shinii are on Chernoye

Called back to Alyssa on urgent matters

Kaeti and Felix are also called back

Alyssa says she was tracking something, and it landed in Elsedon.

Alyssa has 0276 join the party.

The 5 travel to Elsedon

Blight of the Immortals follows Forgotten Dreams, but not directly afterwards. It occurs roughly a year after the events of the 1st book. In this story, a Harvester arrives on Kapteyn b, over the Layton Isles. Alyssa immediately recognizes something sent from Earth arriving on Kapteyn, and when she finds its landing trajectory, she shoots a message to Zeljko and Shinii telling them to take a train to Kaeti's warehouse where Alyssa would meet him. The trains had been extended into Chernoye's major cities and ports, and was fairly easy for them to navigate the lines. Alyssa tells the 4 traditional team members that she will be sending them to the Layton Isles to investigate the object, as it is hidden from the curve of the Earth from Alyssa's perspective. However, Alyssa's main “henchwoman” is appointed to be their guide, now 5 members are on the team. The crew ship out to crowded ports, as it appears like a crisis is going on. The said object from Earth does not appear to be a friendly one. They arrive on the Layton Isles to anarchy in the ports, and their ship is shot with a rocket in the harbor. The 5 make their way to the coast further away from the port. The small towns are less chaotic, and people are leaving. They befriend a farmer making the trek cross-island, and he agrees to take them to the desired impact area. Time jumps forward a few days, the farmer stops short of a huge lake in the way of the road. The party is thrown to the back of the truck bed. It is sunrise, and as they look toward the end of the lake, a figure stands tall above the landscape. It is white, likely over a kilometer in height, with clouds swirling around its head. They set up the device, and its red lasers scan the giant. The scan is sent to Alyssa, and she analyses it to be something beyond their comprehension, but unmistakable man made. Alyssa sends the new planet hopper which was repaired in the week it took the team to get there. It takes them back onto the Library in less than 2 hours. They find that the giant produces a highly compressed signal, and is sending it directly to a gateway around Kapteyn a. They assume it is using the same technology as the Archive

uses, just bigger. The same sort of wavelength had been recorded from all of the “missing” signals and exoplanets observed by Alyssa in the last 2 thousand years. They make the correct assumption that this giant has come to “harvest” Kapteyn b. The intercepted signal showed the giant directly communicating with 3 others in the Kapteyn system, 2 already on Kapteyn c, and one one rocketing toward Kapteyn b, showing a landing point off the coast of the southernmost continent which is not quite colonized fully. A question is posed of how the harvesting would take place, and Alyssa poses the strong possibility that in order to take the mineral rich centers of the planets, they would smash them. It is immediately called as nonsense, as it would take unimaginable amounts of energy to do so with planets as large as those in the Kapteyn system. Little did they know, the harvesters had this power. At the center of each harvester is a very small singularity, rotating at immense speeds. This singularity gives each harvester the power of a star at its disposal. A harvester can crack the crust of a rocky planet like a hard boiled egg thrown against a wall, sending material jetting out of either side. It generates a 0-G field around itself, slowly growing. Eventually, this will turn into anti-gravity, thrusting material upwards toward space. When enough of this is collected, the material comes crashing down onto the surface at unimaginable speeds. the process then repeats over and over.

Document 17: Forgotten Dreams Public Document

Created on May 19th, 2019. Last Modified on June 29th, 2019.

Note: This looks like an unfinished public Google Drive document. Didn't get far!

Spacecraft

- P Class Vessel, 4 Ships Available
    - The P Class Vessel is used for shuttling passengers and light cargo for local distances, whether it be surface to surface, to station, or to moon. They're very slick, made for both air and space travel. Having the ability to fly like a plane and maneuver like a spacecraft, P Classes are very capable vessels. They can carry up to 7 human passengers, 4 mid sized robots, and a ballpark range of about a ton of cargo at once. The vessels are capable of vertical or horizontal liftoff, however landing is preferred to be horizontal.
    - Pioneer
    - Pilgrim
    - Pathfinder
    - Palmer
- E Class

Kaeti

- Backstory
    - Kaeti is a robot, specifically the Model F5 from Macrocorp. She was manufactured roughly 30 years before The Event, and sold directly to a mechanic in a northern region of the colony. The town was small, and business was generally not busy. The mechanic, who beared the name Danny, purchased Kaeti to help him around the shop as he aged. The Model F5 was praised as being both a very strong and enduring model, great for helping around heavy labor workplaces. However, it's humanlike appearance and personality marketed the model as also being a replacement for a sexual and romantic partner. Danny did not overlook this fact. Kaeti learned most of what she needed to run the shop, and as Danny grew into his late 60s, Kaeti ran the whole show. One morning, Danny was no longer present, neither was any other human. The Event had occurred.
- Film Collection
    - Kaeti has a collection of shows, which she keeps on a shelf with her boxing tapes. These shows consist of:
        - Magic Quest!
        - My Ordinary Life

- Super Pasta Brothers Super Show
- Housestuck
- Bodacious Kisyku World
- A Dragon Story
- Behemoth Ridge
- Gilvazunner Christmas Crisis

CHAPTERS

- Chapter 1 -
- Chapter 2 - Enter the Ring
- Chapter 3 -
- Chapter 4 - The Triumverate Cities
- Chapter 5 - [Latin scientific name]
- Chapter 6 - The Kapetynese Legacy

Chapter 2

- begins with shinii exiting the train, stretching. ewoko and zeljko follow. they step into the train platform, and gaze at the small town square. ewoko leads them down the single road, through the centre of town, and toward a large airplane hangar looking building. out front, there is a smaller building, attached to the main one. ewoko gestures them into the small building, and the two walk in. it is a very heavily used room, but a sort of receptionist area mainly. a small kaetron is manning the front desk. shinii is barely tall enough to look over the desk. he asks the small robot if it knew where they could speak to a person by the name of katie. the kaetron doesn't move or notice them at all. zel waves his hand in front of its face. still, no reaction. shinii turns around to tell ewoko that they were having no luck, but ewoko was nowhere to be found. when looking outside the building, this confirmed the previous suspicions. shinii closes the door, and takes a deep breath. he aggressively walks toward the desk, pushing zeljko aside. shinii sprouts 3 filiments, lifting the kaetron from it's seat. "HEY BUSTER!" he yells. the robot looks slightly upward, acknowledging his existence. "alright, we're looking for some girl in this crummy town by the name of katie. supposedly she knows everything there is, and we'd like to know what went down round here. can you tell us where she could possibly be?" the robot sits idly. shinii gets infuriated. shinii opens their mouth again to protest, but the robot finally made a movement. it pointed toward a little reel of tickets. "why thank you." he glanced around "zel. can you grab one of those, you're probably closer." there is no response. shinii drops the robot into its swirly chair, drifting away from the desk. shinii looks behind them, and zel is drawing smileys in the frost on the windows. shinii begrudgingly gets up and grabs a ticket. the number says 478. "well, i suppose all we've

got left to do is wait." shinii leans against a wall near a doorway. the moment he settles in. the door slams open, onto him. the force ruptures the nanobot connection and he disintegrates into dust. the figure who came through the door begins to cough, saying "who has been blowing goddamn pixie dust all over this office!" kaeti emerges from the mist. quickly, the dust accumulates into a fast moving ball and pops back into a shinii shape. "that's MR pixie dust to you, sugar." kaeti stares at the purple child.

Document 18: Forgotten Dreams Mega-Document

Created on May 18th, 2019. Last Modified on November 2nd, 2019.

Note: A much more finished public Google Drive document. It has much more meat in the backstory sector than previous documents, I must have spent a while on this one.

Welcome to the Forgotten Dreams Public Megadocument!

This document's purpose is to provide a solid canon to the Forgotten Dreams Universe/Multiverse, and give the public an eye into what the story is about. Most things in here aren't super detailed, as they're just general summaries. Hopefully in a while, there will actually be a substantial amount of information here. In the meantime, enjoy what I've written so far.

Oh, and in case you didn't quite it pick up…

If you want to have a completely blind read of the story, you're gonna have to wait a while until I start slowly releasing this thing increment by increment.

So without further ado…

Before the Story

1929. A micro black hole swings by the planet Earth, knocking it off its axis. The north pole of the planet ends up resting in northern Louisiana, bringing huge climate change and extreme water level rises all over the planet. Human civilization is devastated, over a billion people die. Left with a chaotic planet which would not be treating them well anytime soon, humanity looked toward the stars. However, with their lower technological sophistication, it was perplexing how the people living at that time thought they would reach them. With hard work and international collaboration with the League of Nations, some form of order returned to the globe. Scientists from Germany were the first to make the breakthrough in rocket technology, successfully accidentally launching a manhole into space in 1954. In 1972, man reached space. Technology and civilization had a general increase for the next hundred years. In 2186, a corporation looked toward the stars. The corporation we now know as Kapteyn Industries wanted to reach out past the solar system, to find better markets elsewhere in the universe. The corporation spent nearly all of it's net worth commissioning a huge starfaring vessel, The Valor. It was unlike anything built before, by far the biggest single connected structure man had ever made. Shaped like an oversized corn dog, the Valor has a large cylinder stretching down it's center. This cylinder could rotate, providing artificial gravity to its inhabitants. The cylinder was filled with fields, parks,

places of business, and public buildings. However, most business class residence was not inside the cylinder, but in the gravity-less tiny rooms and halls that surrounded the exterior of the ship. The Valor's destination was the 1st rocky planet in the Kapteyn star system, aptly named Kapteyn b. Located nearly 13 light-years away from the Earth, it was a relatively short trip, just a few hundred years. During this time period, technical errors had struck The Valor. With no way to turn around or get help, the passengers had to make due with what they had, and it did not work. Most went into the cryosleep terminals, but those too were malfunctional. Turns out humans weren't so ready for a multi-century star-spanning expedition after all. On arrival to Kapteyn b, there were less than 200 passengers still alive out of the many many thousands which embarked on the journey. Of course, Kapteyn Industries wouldn't be stupid as to let the expedition have a chance of failing, as long as the Valor could keep flying. Stashed on the ship were tens of thousands of embryos, which kept the mission well supplied with people to do their bidding. Of course, the heads of Kapteyn Industries were healthy and well upon arrival, eager to begin ordering the building of this new civilization. The remaining passengers and corporate heads took several mass passenger ships down to the ground, and began to set up a small camp along the coast of the peninsula. This camp slowly grew into a town, and quickly into a city. This massive city was eventually named Atama, and served as the capitol of this vastly growing empire. From the outside, Atama looks like any hyper-modern city, with huge skyscrapers with incredible feats of architecture, aside from one feature. A huge spire, appearing like huge cables spidering from the ground upward, soared upward from the skyline and out of sight. This is the only space elevator on Kapteyn, and connects directly to the Valor. The 2nd tallest building, behind the space elevator in height, is the Centre of Industry, serving as a capitol building for the corporation, and thusfore the empire. Inside of the Centre of Industry was the Executive Board, consisting of 7 oligarchs. These 7 individuals controlled all happenings inside the corporation. Of course, they did have some assistance in governance. Every settlement with more than 10,000 members could apply for a mayorship, and upon acceptance, could send a representative to Atama. These representatives could propose laws to be voted on by the Executive Board. The mayorship positions were just a way to make the populace believe they had say in the law, and for the Board to gauge whether some laws actually needed to be passed. The Board also maintained control over the judicial system, being the highest court in the land. This governmental system is important to note, as it was critical to the collapse of the empire. The empire continued to grow throughout the continent it was first founded upon, spreading much further north than Atama was (imagine the distance between Panama and Yukon). In response to this rapid growth, the Executive Board ordered an immediate inquiry into how to transport people and resources between these far off cities. At that time, the only efficient way to do this was by aircraft, more often spacecraft that just never left atmosphere. To find a better way to solve this issue, the Board opened a new branch of the government, the Imperial Science Department. Initially, only 2 were permitted in the department, Dr. Jotsmoth, head of department, and Dr. Varsto, vice head of department. Dr. Jotsmoth is a very excitable person, who is always eager to jump into a problem. He is very charismatic, pretty cute, and pretty much

always dresses in either golf clothes or a lab coat. Dr. Varsto is a much more strict and firm character, completing every task he is given quickly, and efficiently without question. Contrary to Jotsmoth's outbursts of excitement, Varsto keeps a stone cold face, even in the most prestigious of victories. When given the task of solving the issue of transportation, they came up with a magnetic high speed rail system. The tracks and cars were so cheap to make, that the Executive Board gave permission to Jotsmoth and Varsto to expand it further, connecting every single town in the empire which had a population of more than 2,500. After this, the department was expanded with more staff. What began as an inquiry to find out how to solve existing issues, the ISD began to proactively create new technology. Collaborating with people back on Earth was an issue, however. It took 25 and a half years to send a message from Kapteyn to Earth and back again. Instead of directly speaking, both planets just actively exchanged information, at a nearly 13 year delay both ways. There had been colonies established on other planets closer to Kapteyn, but most were religious or ethnic groups not too worried about advancing science. In the time since the Alyssa left Sol, some radical changes occured to human civilization around it's home star. A Dyson Swarm had almost finished construction by this time, and with the technology developed would be able to transport humans into a digital world. Their brains would be scanned and modeled, and in essence transporting the person into a digital image of themselves. There they would live out their lives in this digital paradise, powered by an immensely powerful computer made possible by the Dyson Swarm. Since perception of time could be edited in this virtual space, the people inside could live for previously inconceivably long periods of time. For every 3 days of real universe time, a person in this virtual space would experience a year of time. When this computer was finished, and people began to move into the system on droves, the ISD watched carefully to observe what would occur. After 4 months, 95% of the human population in the Sol system were absorbed. The only people not absorbed were stragglers who refused to make the jump, and the millions living in the outer solar system who were too far away for efficient absorption. 17 years after the computer was completed, the ISD received a notification that all eligible citizens had been absorbed. 2 weeks later, Kapteyn received it's last transmission from officials in the Sol system. According to some of the 4.2 million who were not absorbed, the entire Dyson Swarm had been shut down, and it's contents erased. The computer itself however, was still intact. The unbelievable power of this computer was about to be used for the bidding of evil. An organization of unregistered roamers, people who lived in spaceships or asteroids and never registered with any government, invaded the control room which was held by the only officials left in authority. Once they had taken this room, they met face to face with the computer. The roamers asked, "Our mission is to obliterate the universe. Tell us how we can accomplish this." The computer sat idly. "Affirmative," the computer responded. It paused for a second. "But it will take a bit." It was now the roamers' turn to idle. "How long will it take you to complete your answer?" the leader of the roamers asked. "Hmm…" the computer pretended to think for a while. "About 9 thousand years," it responded. The roamers were understandably shocked and infuriated, slack jawed. "What do you all want me to do, give you a big laser pointer and stick you on a ship for Alpha Centauri? If you want to

destroy the universe right you're gonna have to let me think about it. Now scram." And as such, the roamers let the computer think about it. The scientists back on Kapteyn had no clue about any of this hubbub, but they were receiving automatic debriefing transmissions from the computer as it slowly uncovered the answer. In these transmissions, the scientists uncovered some incredible data. Among some of the more mundane experiments and equations, the computer had already solved one of its most critical questions, how does one create their own universe? It uncovered that by smashing 2 protons together at a fraction less than lightspeed, a rip can be made in our universe, leading to another. This rip can be forced apart and enlarged to where even spaceship sized objects can pass through. The only issue is that the critical laws of physics that govern in our universe are not the same in all others. When a spaceship or any other particle from this universe passes into another, it could potentially be ripped apart or critically changed. The ISD immediately created an experiment to test this hypothesis. Using an admittedly hastily built particle accelerator, a gateway was opened to another universe. It appeared spherical in shape, with a sort of fisheye effect from the gravitational lensing around its circumference. Upon sending inside a small probe with some sensors and a camera, the probe immediately turned into nothingness. It would take many many trials to finally find a universe compatible with laws like ours. This universe they eventually found was empty and dead, despite having laws of physics close to our own. Upon closer examination by probes, the scientists found that that universe was trillions and trillions of years old, so old that all particles had decayed, and black holes had evaporated. There was nothing left but a blank canvas. As more trials were conducted, hundreds of these types of universes were found. They were by far the most common type; old, empty, dark, lifeless. It was around this time, about 6 years after the first transmissions of the multiverse discovery were heard, that the government had another problem it needed the ISD to solve. The citizens of Kapteyn were becoming irritated and angry at their government, who did not allow them basic freedoms like speech, press, religion, etc. Along with these freedoms, the people were also faced with a separate problem entirely, overpopulation. The oligarchs had wanted to only populate a specific region of Kapteyn, just one large portion of a continent. However, with the rapidly growing population, they were beginning to run out of space in this region. Instead of letting the populace expand outwards over the oceans and north pole, the oligarchs restricted their ability to move outwards, marking a border where people could not cross. Of course, people still crossed this border. Initially these people could be contained with seeking military units, but the mass of people moving across became so great this stopped being effective at all. This is where the ISD came in, how to contain or eliminate a large mass of people over a large area. Jotsmoth and Varsto were unsure of what to do, as this violated every ethical guideline they were inclined to follow. Unfortunately, under imperial rule, you don't quite get a say in what you want to do. Both leaders decided to come up with their own tactics, and would come back together and decide which one they would prefer to use. After much time, they presented their ideas to each other. Dr. Jotsmoth wanted to build a wall, not one made out of stone or a fence, but something closer to a force field. Once you cross this forcefield-like barrier, your memories would be completely erased. On top of this, your vocal

abilities would also be ceased, not allowing you to speak to anyone. Dr. Varsto drafted plans for a bioweapon. This bioweapon would take over the body of its host, knock it unconscious, and decompose its body extremely quickly. In essence, once activated, the host would fall unconscious to the ground, and melt into a puddle. Painless for the host, and very effective. No one would have to be killed in Jotsmoth's plan, and would have a very high chance of turning anyone away who would dare cross. Varsto's plan was much more lethal, and would kill any who crossed the border intentionally. The 2 spoke, and could not come to a conclusion on who's would be utilized. Jotsmoth was too much of a pacifist, and would not directly kill anyone by his own hands. They came to an agreement to send both plans to the Executive Board, and have them decide which plan was optimal. However, the board sent both back, approving them, and ordering their immediate construction. Jotsmoth's wall was easy to create, the neurotical technology was already heavily in use. Varsto's weapon was another story. Creating a bioweapon with a kill switch, on top of the features Varsto wanted equipped on it, would be an extremely difficult task. However, Jotsmoth proposed that they use his already existing nanobot technology and modify that just for this use. Jotsmoth's nanobots were a feat of engineering, being smaller than a typical human cell, and being able to work in coordination with millions of other nanobots to accomplish a task. In Jotsmoth's private lab far north, just a few miles from the border, he was busy heavily testing this technology in most of his spare time. One of his most impressive prototypes was a functioning robot using the nanobots, successfully using them like "cells" in a singular unit. Jotsmoth performed trials on this robot, testing the capabilities of the technology. With some modification by Varsto, these nanobots were now able to become killing machines. Once inside the body, the nanobots took over a very small amount of cells so the immune system would not trigger, and used the body's own resources to reproduce. They would then spread throughout the body harmlessly, eventually being released into the air and onto surfaces. The nanobots would find another host, and the process would repeat. Once all the law violating citizens were infected, a kill switch would be activated. At that point toxins would be released from all of the nanobots, knocking the host unconscious, and breaking apart the chemical bonds in their body, effectively melting the host into a puddle of biomass in a matter of minutes. The technology was approved by the Board of Executives, and was set to be released over a camp on the other side of the border as a test trial. Both Varsto and Jotsmoth were very hesitant about this. Along with the technology being untested on this scale and extremely new, the nanobots were not fully finished. Their designs had left room for a global positioning sensor, so every host could be monitored. This way, the scientists would know whether the nanobots had spread to the inside of the empire or not. This sensor was not included in that version, as the scientists had not figured out how to program the body's cells to produce them yet. With no choice in the matter, Jotsmoth and Varsto executed the trial. A barrel of the nanobots was slowly dumped from an aircraft over the camp, showering the inhabitants. The experiment was planned to last 3 days, giving the nanobots double the time they would need to spread to all inhabitants. However, the Executive Board vetoed this. They extended the experiment to 2 months. Both scientists found this absurd. Why would the board decide to make such an idiotic decision? Unfortunately, they

had no say in the matter. All they could do was hope. 6 weeks after the experiment began, and a week and a half before the deadline, Jotsmoth was running a blood test on one of the lower ranked scientists. He found the nanobots in their blood. He tested every since scientist in the ISD, including himself, and found the same nanobots. The entire continent had to have been infected by this point. Jotsmoth alerted Varsto, and they immediately made moves to cancel the experiment and find a way to disable the nanobots. Unfortunately, there was no such way. As long as there was 1 host for the nanobots to multiply in, there would be a ticking time bomb on humanity. So, Jotsmoth decided to work on a "cure", something to disable the receptors on the nanobots so they couldn't execute their death program. After nearly a week of continuous work on the project, he finished. There wasn't enough time to dose the population, however. As a last ditch effort to at least somewhat preserve humanity, Jotsmoth had him and Varsto quickly inject all 128 members of the ISD with the vaccine. 7 hours later, at the stroke of midnight, Kapteyn's first empire went out with a whisper. Upon waking the next morning, the ISD members found it odd they were no longer receiving comms messages from headquarters. Jotsmoth and Varsto knew all too well. They told the members what had occurred, and it was likely they were the only people on Kaptyen left to tell the tale. A couple laughed in disbelief. A few immediately broke down and cried for their loved ones. Most remained still, and silent. However, there was 1 group of uninfected individuals. They had already crossed a large ocean barrier, even with the restrictions those people had. These 14 individuals would be responsible for the entire upbringing of the globalization of humanity. The scientists never knew this.

The First Volume

- Prologue

The story begins with a boy face down in the snow. He hoists himself up, and looks around the landscape. It's mostly flat with snow covering every inch of the landscape, save for a few boulders. Huge mountains and glaciers dot the skyline. The boy cannot remember where he is. In fact, he cannot remember anything, not even his own name. He sees a sack near where he fell, and picked it up. The pack had some trinkets, dried foodstuff, and a letter inside. In brief, the letter tells the boy his name, Zeljko, that he cannot remember his past due to a field he crossed, and that there is no reason to return across the field looking for home. With this information, he began walking toward the mountains. Eventually, a snowstorm began, hiding everything from view. Making his way through the white soup of snow, Zeljko moved forward until falling into the snow once again. He had fallen into a trap door placed on the ceiling of a shed. The shed wasn't very large, only 6 meters by 4 meters. Shelves lined the walls, with large workbenches as well. they were chock full of odd gadgets Zeljko had never seen before, all covered in an extremely thick layer of dust and grime. The most peculiar thing was the large buckets of extremely fine black sand, they didn't seem to have any purpose. While snooping around this

shed, a rat scurried out of the shelves, startling Zeljko. He jumped backwards into a workbench, where a dense metal sphere fell onto the ground. This sphere glowed purple inside of the engravings on its surface, and began to attract some of the fine sand toward it. The sand coelesed, glowing different shades of purple, floating higher into the air. After a few seconds of the tornado of particles, it burst apart revealing a being in the shape of a boy, about middle school age. The boy remarked about how cool their entrance was, and introduced themself.

- Chapter 1
    - Setting

This chapter is set in the far north, in a tundra. Everything is coated in ice and snow, except for the roads. Most of the main interactions occur inside the city, which is circular in shape, with 3 main rings. The inside ring is industry, the middle ring is residential, and the outer ring is a combination of residential and production. There are no suburbs outside the city, the outer buildings of the 3rd ring abruptly separate the city from the sprawling icy plains. There are no colors or flare to the city, exposed concrete and metal make up almost the entirety of the sights. The only saving grace of the architecture is the road and transportation structure, and the way the buildings are designed to look different from one another, but not out of place. In the centre of the inner ring is a large open square, reminiscent of Times Square in NYC. The city is populated very sparsely, with all of its residents falling under the control of a ragtag leader. Most are simple appliance robots, ones that serve simple functions. Kitchen appliances, lamps, staplers, chairs, any household item you can think of can probably save you money

- Chapter 2
    - Setting

- Chapter 3
    - Setting

Forgotten Dreams

- Volume 1
    - Prologue
    - Chapter 1
    - Chapter 2
    - Chapter 3
- Volume 2
    - Chapter 4

- Volume 3
    - Chapter 5

    - Chapter 6

Blight of the Immortals

- Volume 4
- Volume 5
- Volume 6
- Epilogue

Characters in order of appearance

- Zeljko Bozovic
- Shinii

Allow me to talk some more about Shinii. Shii is one of the protagonists in my novel, Forgotten Dreams. First off, they're the right hand man of the head of the crew, Zeljko. Shii appears right off the bat in Chapter 1, so his existence isn't much of a surprise. You may notice that I'm using non-binary pronouns for Shii. That isn't necessarily due to them being non-binary, but because Shii is not one entity, but a collection of many. Shii's body is made up of many small nanobots, which are bigger than a bacterium, but smaller than a typical human cell. These nanobots are all controlled by a central processing and power unit, which is visible under their vest. When one of these nanobots touches the power source, or another nanobots already touching the source, it emits a purple glow, explaining their violet hew. Created by an ancient entity before the fall of Kapetyn's sole empire, Shii's technology beyond this point is unknown, even to Shinii themself.

- D.W. Hertig
- Alyssa Blondeau
- Student 01
- Kaeti Nakazo
- Orion
- Monarch 1
- Monarch 2
- Student 02, Dictator
- The Simulator
- Liutprand Kepler
- Richard Jotsmoth
- Alban Varsto
- Vince Hawkes

Vince Hawkes is a detective in the City of New Sigsbee, the 2nd and largest of the Triumvirate Cities. He's a short man, coming in at about 4'11". He claims he's 5'0". He also has a rounder shape, at about 87 kilos. Vince wears a dark gray, short, wool trenchcoat. It has a mustard stain that won't come out. Underneath this is a black vest with a dark blue bowtie, and a set of

wrinkled dress pants. On his feet, he wears a pair of leather sandals, with black socks. On Vince's head, he wears the typical fedora, although it is quite large for his size. His face is easily obscured by the hat, and we don't see what it looks like for the entirety of the novel. However, 2 aqua eyes shine through the hat's shadow.

Vince is lazy. Absurdly lazy. I'm not quite sure how he even still holds this detective gig. Despite being lazy, Vin is somehow the most efficient and reliable detective in New Sigsbee, mostly because literally no one else wants to take the job. Crime is rampant, and gangs run loose without fear of police resistance. It's hell for a good cop. Luckily for Vin, he isn't a very good cop. That is his strategy, after all. There's a point where you pass inadequacy, and transcend into a different plane, one of complete lethargy. This is where Vin resides. Even counting his laziness, you had to admire Vince's skills at problem solving, and being able to read a person like a book. When he was able to overcome that weakness, Vin could solve a case like no other. Literally like no other, because there is no metric to even compare him to.

Vince's office is on the 14th floor of the Keystone Tower, a building outside the main business district of New Sigsbee. The door is made of heavy mahogany, with a large frosted window in the centre. On the window, letters read the word "detective." in all lowercase. Inside his office, it is dark, illuminated only by a singular lamp and the sun coming through the window shades. The back window is large, and takes up the majority of that wall. The floor appeared wooden, with small planks. Lining the walls were huge wooden bookshelves, full of large textbooks and files. In the very centre, on top of a circular magenta carpet with gold embroidery, a huge mahogany desk sits. Papers are piled on top of the desk, but a nice gap in the centre is placed for Vin to lay his feet. In front of it, 2 leather chairs. Behind was a larger swivel chair, with a velvet texture. The whole place is a massive fire hazard.

The Forgotten Dreams Multiverse

Due to the discoveries made in the early history of the Forgotten Dreams universe, the characters are easily able to travel outside their own universe, and into the multiverse. With technology from the ISD and unique parts created by Alyssa with her students and later Kaeti, the cast of characters can selectively find active universes with comply with their laws of physics, and travel to them. More importantly, the Forgotten Dreams Multiverse allows for one critical addition to the canon, crossovers. In most stories, crossovers are usually not canon, with the crossover not applying to the rules of the series and its characters. However, in Forgotten Dreams, the characters can canonically travel to other stories and interact with their characters, having an effect on what takes place afterwards. I have no current plans to write after the second story, which leaves the series off on a closing note, so all crossovers and travels into the FDM take place after those events occur.

Over a thousand years had passed since the last notification came in, and Alyssa Blondeau was fed up with it all.

Day after day, she stared at that wretched screen. Sure, it was impressive, wrapping around the entire control room of the vessel, but it would have been great if something would actually change on it. No point in a screen that doesn't do jack. Still, like clockwork, every day she observed the maps and statistics for any sign of change along the border. As per usual, today had no important readings. Alyssa pushed herself away from the control deck, floating through the open quarters door and into cramped maze of brightly lit passageways which made up the administrative sector of the vessel. She took a long, deep breath, and closed her eyes for a brief moment. She relaxed the tension in her shoulders, as the purring of the air circulation system massaged her ears. She cherished her short moments of bliss. At the end of the hall, Alyssa reached an elevator towards the main sanctum. The doors shuttered as they moved, she made a mental note to oil them sometime before eternity ended. As the elevator car made its way through the kilometers long tube, Alyssa was greeted with the sweet sensation of weight upon her feet. After hours of floating, it was very welcome. The car jolts to a stop, as a bell rings. As the doors attempted to open themselves, the cold air of the sanctum rushed in to greet her. She stepped out of the elevator car and onto the luscious grass of the sanctum. The view from here almost never got old. The plain of grass extended up, continuing in a ring all around the cylindric cavity of the sanctum. The sanctum spins, giving the feeling of gravity to those on the inside perimeter. The sun, contained inside a copper reinforced glass done, shined light all throughout the cavity. Forests of pine trees are spread across the surface, weaving around the buildings, paths, and fields. Most of the buildings in the sanctum are wood and concrete structures, the only exception being the medical centre. Linked by concrete paths made for foot traffic or light vehicles, the buildings were not too spread apart. Most served an educational purpose, the entirety of the sanctum was more or less a school after all. As if right on queue, a voice shouts, "Professor Blondeau!" Alyssa jerks her head around to greet the person behind her, but alas, no one is there. "

Document 19: NaNoWriMo, Forgotten Dreams Alpha

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Note: The National Novel Writing Month draft of Forgotten Dreams. Coming in at about 10 thousand words, it's a big chunk of text. I'm proud of myself from that period for getting as far as they did, considering how poor the earlier attempts went. The biggest thank you ever to my AP English Composition and Literature teacher, you forced me to get my act together! <3

Prologue

Kuwana

Statistically speaking, most adult humans have a considerable fear of being locked in a small space for a prolonged period of time. For someone who had spent their entire life in a glorified tin can pressurized with air, a fear such as that should have never even been considered to be a factor. Yet, here was Yuwa Kuwana, scared shitless in a shelter surrounded with particles that, within minutes of contact, were sure to warrant a visit from the Angel of Death. At this point, she welcomed him.

Four days ago, Kuwana had spoken with the old woman at home. "I need you to take this job, because not a single fucking person in your rank will swallow the god damn toad," she said. "Being captain doesn't mean shit on surface runs, you know that better than I do. Whenever I put Kylma on as captain, he acts like he's taking a holiday to some isolated beach. Now that he's *actually* on holiday, I've got no one to take the role. You're more than capable of executing the worst tasks I could ever giving, so don't go fuck this one up." Add that one to the ever growing cabinets of bullshit.

Not a day's time had passed before the Pioneer was stocked and ready for descent. The Pio was ancient, and probably had more replaced and repaired parts than what initially came on the ship. Out of the eight P-Class vehicles initially shipped from the surface, the Pio was one of two ships that remained functional. Nevertheless, she flew time and time again.

Chapter 1

Zeljko

Two centuries ago, the polar region of Chraini-Sevyr seemed to be a wholly unwelcome place. It was just about like any other peninsula you could find yourself living on Jiah, only more so. Freezing winters with unending nights contrasted by rainy summers with a sun that would never set, terrain with cliffs sharper than a knife's edge cut by the pounding of glaciers, and rocky, frozen soil that tested the strength of flora from about anywhere. The people who lived there, needless to say, were like everyone else on Jiah, only more so. The region's career fields were almost entirely made up of fishermen, harvesting the plentiful ocean life migrating north during the eternal light of the summer. This was the Sevyrian way of life for longer than their words had been recorded, and not one of its inhabitants desired to change them.

Two centuries ago, plus or minus a few days, Syl Veselovsky came out of the collosal central mountain range with nearly 14 kilograms of gold on his back. The Sevyrians had suddenly found a much better way to waste those eternal summers, and change, they did. As if a flame were suddenly lit from nothingness, the Great Chraini-Sevyrian Gold Rush began. With quick pace, the city-states and small nations of people began to expand their territory into the inhospitable mountain ranges and glaciers. As the largest states in the region began to consolidate power over the less fortunate villages, great nations rose from the dust and ice on the financial back of their riches. As in most places, with new borders came unique conflicts. Could someone from the Republic of Ruvimann sift for gold in the rivers claimed by the state of Kyenik? Of course, the only way to practically solve these problems like civilized men was through intense, decades long guerilla warfare in some of the most inhospitable climates known to man.

In the middle of their war of greed, the Empire of Arnosa crossed the Chrainian Channel and began marching northward through the southern plains and tundra. As if they had all been blind, the entire peninsula had a collective realization of their idiocy. In a rare historical moment of unity, the nations of Chraini-Sevyr put decades of military conflict toward a single evil, and

beat a conqueror of empires back to their borders. With a treaty signed in the Sevyrian city of Kapustin, the nations made peace with a power seemingly destined to butcher them. In this new state of political affairs, the Union of Sevyrian States was formed to bring the peninsula to an unbreakable era of unending peace.

Roughly four years ago, an incredibly rich supply of oil was found underneath the kilometer thick glaciers of Chraini, closer to the north pole than the direct rule of any nation. This area of land was inside of a shared economic zone, administered by the laws of the Union of Sevyrian States. The nations of Chernoye and Svyetlapki both claimed possession over the monetary benefits from the oil, as Svyetlapkian scientists found the deposits, and Chernoyian scientists drilled them. Svyetlapki wouldn't agree to a direct split of the profits with Chernoye, instead opting to claim the entirety of them. As such, for the first time in over a century, two nations of Chraini-Sevyr went into direct military conflict with one another, but this time, instead of gold, tens of thousands would be losing their lives over dust and ice, just like before.

Zeljko Osvobodi thought it was an interesting distraction.

"You're not listening at all, are you,"

[UNFINISHED, CHECK RECYCLING BIN MORON]

Chapter 2

Alyssa

Eleven centuries had passed since the last notification from the surface came in, and Alyssa Blondeau was fed up with it all.

Day after day, she stared at that wretched display. It was impressive, a huge central point in the control room of her vessel, but it would have been more interesting if something could change on it. There's no point in a screen that does nothing but sit in silence, just like there's no point in a captain that does nothing but look at useless screens. Despite this, like clockwork, every third cycle Alyssa observed the maps and statistics for any sign of signals from the surface of Jiah. As per usual, today had no important readings.

"How riveting." she muttered to herself, turning the display off once more.

After a long moment, Alyssa floated up and out of the ragged, old captain's chair in front of the displays. She stared at the gleaming surface of Jiah from the room's windows.

Across her entire view, huge oceans, mountains, forests, and tundra were to be seen. Although the landmasses below her never changed, the view never grew tiring.

From the large continent which spanned the northern pole of the planet, a skinny appendage reached out from the coast. As it stretched south it grew wider, creating a formation which appeared like a crab claw facing east. Westward, a lengthy strip connected the northern landmass to the appendage, creating a massive sea. Only a few small slivers of land prevented it from bursting into the huge oceans blanketing Jiah. Small island chains peppered her oceans, like pimples on a gleaming skin of blue.

It was late autumn in the north, if she remembered correctly. All the scattered cloud formations further from the equator may have been snow at that point. It was something she missed about planets, the quiet static of soft snowfall.

Staring at the pretty planet was always a good time waster. *Better to not get distracted, there's a whole lot of nothing to waste my time on,* she thought.

Alyssa pushed herself away from the control deck, flying steadily through the open quarters door, and into the cramped maze of brightly lit passageways which made up the exterior shell of the vessel. As hatches and open corridors flew by, she soared with the extreme precision of someone well practiced in null gravity.

Alyssa took a long, deep breath, and closed her eyes for a brief moment. She relaxed the tension in her shoulders, as the purring of the air processing systems massaged her ears. She cherished these relatively short moments of bliss.

At the end of the hall, Alyssa floated through the doors of the tram station. Its only tram, directed toward the sanctum, was due to arrive at any moment. Protective sheathing barely clung to the walls, with lamps and furniture clamped to what was supposed to be a floor. From Alyssa's perspective, it was just the wall to her left. The design assumed there would be a direction of down to permit their usefulness. If anything, the small station was more akin to a two star hotel lobby than a subway station.

She flipped a worn, red switch, still functioning after all these years of cyclic abuse. Alyssa felt for the inanimate object, in an apologetic sort of sense.

After a few minutes, a pleasant ting echoed across the hall as the tram arrived. Through the worn doors separating pressurized cabin from hard vacuum, she could watch the tram's windows flit by.

When it had stopped, the opening doors shuttered as they moved, getting stuck along the track of the doorway. Alyssa made a mental note to oil them sometime before eternity ended. She stepped inside.

The car made its way through the tube, and eventually slowed to a halt. With a jerk, it suddenly sped up drastically, as Alyssa was greeted with the sweet sensation of weight upon her feet. After hours of floating, it was very welcome.

It was genuinely interesting how masterfully the vessel was designed. The Valor, shaped like a rather oversized corn dog, is a shell of offices and engineering platforms around a rotating cylinder dubbed the 'Sanctum'. In order to pass into the sanctum from the outer shell, the tram has to synchronize its spin. On an infinite loop, it speeds up to the rate of spin of the sanctum,

and easily passes through as if the tram were motionless. The effect of all that work? A very pleasant 1/3 surface gravity. For someone of her age, it was nice on the joints.

The spinning of the sanctum is similar to spinning a toddler around by their arms- as you spin faster, the force which wants to fling the child off horizontally into space is counteracted by your grip. It's the same sort of principal in the sanctum, except with an entire world in turn for a parent, and everything in it for a toddler.

As if it were meant to pierce her thoughts, her wrist terminal made an obnoxious blatting sound. She double tapped the band to wake the device. Squinting, the neon red banner on the top of the display read, "One hour without bounce-back signal from vessel 'Pioneer'. Investigation is recommended at earliest convenience."

Well, that's certainly interesting.

There shouldn't have been anything down on the surface which could block the line of sight signal from the *Pioneer*. Its captain and pilots knew how to handle the vessel better than anyone, and whatever had occurred, they would certainly have it under control. The *Pioneer*'s current crew, consisting entirely her most skilled students, could not be any better staffed. However, by protocol, Alyssa had to manually affirm contact with the vessel. This meant a trip back to the control deck, or another similarly equipped area. Going back to that dreadful room another time in the same 30 hour period was something Alyssa had no intention of doing. Going to the senior officer's station may be the better decision, or at least more comfortable. Plus, with Kylma on holiday, she would have some company in her misery.

"Oh Ms. Kuwana," she sighed, "Whatever shall I do with you and your crew?" she asked to no one in particular.

The tram made a sudden jolt upward, and slowed to a stop. Another more pleasant ting chimed, this time from the tram itself.

As the doors began to slowly open themselves, the cold air of the sanctum blew in to greet her. She stepped out of the tram car and onto the luscious grass that blanketed the entire space. Of all the views on the vessel, this one always took her breath away.

The plain she stood upon extended up, continuing in a ring of grass all around the cylindrical cavity of the sanctum. The reactor, contained inside a copper reinforced glass dome, shined light down a glass tube stretching across the centre of the cavity.

Forests of pine trees spread across the surface, weaving around the buildings, paths, and fields. Most of the buildings were composed of ancient wood, stone, and bricks, but the newer buildings erected in relatively recent years were of plastic and aluminium. Linked by concrete paths made for foot traffic or light vehicles, the buildings weren't too spread apart. With such a small space to work with, there wasn't room to be. Most buildings served an educational purpose, or serviced its few inhabitants, as the entirety of the sanctum was more or less an overly complex school.

As if purposefully to shatter her daydream, a voice pierced the air.

"Howdy, Professor B!" Alyssa jerked her head around to greet the annoyance behind her, but alas, no one was there.

She looked up to see Reiko, flying above her in the sky, or rather the space between the ground and the ceiling above her. No, not flying, floating. His black hair spread around his head, drifting in the air currents circulating in the sanctum. If he wasn't careful, he'd drift right into the light source.

"Mr. Mengyou!" said Alyssa, now raising her voice, "I hope you have a plan to get back down from there, because I'm not sending anyone to fetch you." Due to the spinning of the sanctum, he was now facing away from her. Reiko's faint laughter eased her worries.

"Don't worry Ms. B, I've got this all under control. There's nothin' to worry 'bout up here," he said, emphasizing his slight tang of a drawl.

It was something Alyssa had heard in old western films captured before she was born. It could have a charm if used right, but a charm he didn't have. She did admit though, it threw her off seeing someone with such dark skin complexion start speaking like he was going to corral some cattle.

"Uh huh, and what makes you think that? I don't see anything you could possibly use to maneuver yourself around up there," she asked.

"Newton's Third Law Professor! I just gotta throw somethin' and I'll be down in a jiffy. Outta anyone, you should know that. You *did* instruct Physics Fundamentals I in my year, after all."

Alyssa lowered her shoulders, and heavily exhaled. Reiko Mengyou was one of the brightest students she'd ever instructed, intellect wise. You could throw some complex calculus jargon at the boy, and he'd come back to you with at least something intelligible after an hour. However, he never turns in his assignments, skips any class he just doesn't feel like going to, and often ends up in precarious situations at the expense of others. He could have honestly been the worst choice for the Junior students to elect as their president. Reiko may be smart, but he's also an idiot. It's not like she could say that to his face, though.

"You are a fucking idiot." Alyssa shouted in his general direction.

"You're a little slow pickin' up on that one, Blondeau," he said with a grin, again enunciating that drawl. If it wasn't annoying already, it was about to be.

"That's *Ms.* Blondeau to you, Mr. Mengyou. You should be back on campus by communal supper, or I will unleash Newton's Third Law on your ass the second I find something precise enough to hit you." She knew she wouldn't really do something as obscene as that. She would just get someone else to do it. As Alyssa turned around, she could practically feel Reiko's blank stare from half a kilometer away.

She didn't quite care about the specifics of how he got up there, but the stopped motorcar blocking the path almost certainly had something to do with it. It wouldn't be terribly difficult to travel against the direction of the sanctum's spin, and end up in null gravity to hang the air. All you had to do was cancel any centripetal force from the spin, so nothing would be pushing you to the 'ground'. A modified cart with speed limiters removed was perfect for the job. However, it would be quite hard to stop the cart once you were floating above the sanctum, or from the perspective of the person floating, to speed it back up. The dent on the front bumper and the nearby mutilated willow tree told Alyssa all she needed to know regarding that point. It looked like a certain somebody would be raising a new willow tree soon.

She swung into the driver's seat of the vehicle, and popped the trunk to the engine housing. All the LEDs read green, and nothing seemed totally out of place. Alyssa assumed it

would at least get her the two and a half kilometers to her destination. Discarding the notebook and utensil initialed "RKM" to the side of the path, she shifted the cart into drive.

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Alyssa pulled into the cart park behind the head building, choosing a spot in the shade of a branching laurel oak. Stepping out of the cart, she could almost forget of being in an enclosed space. Every meter of land was shaded in the oaks' canopy, apart from a large, open field which laid at the very centre of the campus' circular body. The ceiling they made over the pathways was reminiscent of footage she had seen from the southern everglades of Jiah. As she walked past the heavy iron gates and the skyward clock tower attached to the head, she gazed upon the entirety of the campus.

Its layout was surprisingly simple, at least in comparison to the other campuses on the Valor. Eight large buildings made up the body of the structure, with smaller outlying buildings created recently. The main ring of buildings was styled of ancient brick and stone structures from the Earth, featuring tall columns, large doors, open spaces, and windows which stream in more light than was really necessary. Each of the buildings were connected by paths cutting through the central field, and intersecting where a huge camphor tree stood at the centre.

A true relic, the Great Camphor was the oldest living organism on the vessel. The tree's branches snaked from its huge trunk, creating a massive infrastructure of live wood to rest under. This singular tree's canopy made up a sizable percentage of the entire tree cover on campus. Of all the structures of the senior campus, it had to be Alyssa's personal favorite.

As she was halfway between the outer ring and the Great Camphor, Alyssa saw a figure in its branches. Those broad shoulders, toned muscles, and nearly inhuman mass were unmistakable.

"Kylma!" she shouted, "When did you start talking to trees?" Kylma Armoton looked up from a leather bound book, and then back downwards to where she now stood.

"Turns out, this tree here is the best company I've got with everybody gone," said Kylma.

"Whatever you're up to, finish it and get the hell down from there. I need your help with something more important than plant social hour," she said, her words containing more ferocity than intended.

"What can I say Ally, I speak for these trees," he said, gesturing around him to the branches.

By God, she hated that nickname.

"Don't fucking call me that, Armoton. I'm fed up with your idiotic psuedonyms," she shouted.

"Sounds like the trees are saying that you need to be a little patient." Kylma stood up on the branch, and began to slowly meander back toward the tree's huge trunk.

Alyssa covered her face with her hands, exhaling through gritted teeth. "Meet me at the Communications Centre as soon as physically possible." She took a breath. "We've been having some... communications issues with Kuwana and her crew."

Not more than a breath passed when, with the impact of a bass drum, Kylma hit the soil not a meter in front of her. The resounding force knocked Alyssa firmly on her rear, and sending her glasses tumbling away. He stood back up to full height, towering over her like a sort of malevolent god.

"Sorry about that. You could have just said it was them from the get-go, you know," Kylma said, wearing his typical genial expression. He held out a hand to her.

"Goddamn right you're sorry. If I was in a bad mood today, I'd have thrown your ass off this damn ship." His hand hoisted her up, briefly sending Alyssa flying off the ground. She stumbled, regaining her footing.

"So, what's up with the crew? Did they get my girl stuck in some mud or something?" They began to walk side by side on one of the many circular paths through the field.

"The *Pioneer*'s communication arrays are non-functional, I've received nothing from the ship for almost two hours now. I haven't seen any peculiar readouts from before the signal

dropped either, at least from the data I've had sent to my personal system. Frankly, I'm stumped as to what happened."

"Not even the backup transmitter is talking? Hell, any of their wrist terminals could emit something we could receive. Not much, but at least some text, or binary. I'd bet the sensory arrays could pick up somebody on the other side of the planet rubbing some copper and a magnet. Our transmitter lases are so powerful that if we wanted to communicate with the crew without a radio, I'd just burn a message into the ground!" Kylma chucked at what she guessed to be rather vulgar thoughts. She couldn't help but smile with him.

"This is not the time for joking Mr. Armoton."

"Yeah yeah, I get it." He paused, and glanced up as if looking at something in the canopy above. Kylma then locked eyes with Alyssa, a ferociousness lurking beneath the depths of his cornea. "I can't shake the feeling that her entire crew may be deep in the drink right now. What could have happened to shut off those systems? After the *Palmer* went rogue and blew itself into a fireball a few years back, we were still getting signals from her emergency transmitter for days."

"I know, Kylma. I know. It was my mistake choosing a new captain with such little experience in the art. I thought it would be a good idea to give her experience down planetside early and throw her right into it, you know?" She trailed off, and sighed. "Nevermind that, there's no use in dwelling in the past. There nothing I can do about it now."

At rhhey had walked to the outer circumference of buildings. Kylma motioned to the door of the Communications Centre, and opened it. "Please, after you."

The room that Kylma had secured was dark, too warm for comfort, and smelled strongly of old coffee. The monitors were the only light source, casting a gray shadow to lurk on the peach colored wall behind him. Twenty small screens were stacked upon each other, covering the front wall from corner to corner. They were of an older cathode ray tube model, designed before the Valor had even left the Sol system. They needed replacing, with the newer technology

they had been using for centuries. *Why fix what isn't broken,* Alyssa would always excuse her laziness with. The high pitched hum of electron beams in the displays was beginning to get on her nerves, though. If that couldn't make her get off her ass and fix things, nothing would. Vector diagrams lit every screen, each spooling data or displaying some sort of diagram. On her left, a map of Jiah took up every centimeter of screen real estate.

Alyssa walked into the room carrying tray, containing a pot of tea, a small pitcher of milk, and two mugs. She couldn't do any of this tedious work without her favorite beverage. This blend was a mix of Assam, Kenyan, and Ceylon tea leaves, heavier on the Assam. As always, she would prepare it with a dash of 1 percent milk. She placed the tray on the rickety table in front of Kylma.

"Tea? It's my usual brew," Alyssa asked.

"Thanks for the offer, but you know as well as I do that I am firmly a coffee drinker," Kylma responded. People who could deny a hot cup of tea in a stressful environment would always remain a mystery to her.

"Suit yourself, I thought I may as well extend a hand in these trying times," She poured a steaming portion of tea into one of the mugs. She sipped, and the steaming liquid seeping into her very being. It was a nice distraction.

"What are we looking at, exactly?" Alyssa asked.

"This is a complete map of the surface of Jiah, recorded by the Valor and our planetary positioning probes," said Kylma. "The last time we saw the Pio on the positioning grid, it was-" A bright pink dot appeared on a display. "There. Just as we set the preflight course in our records. It appears to have been in the southeastern sector of the Varsto-Okoye Plateau before it went offline."

"Yes, I am aware of where she was, I've had a sub-window opened on my wrist terminal since the Pioneer left port. We're looking for where they are right now, not hours ago."

"I can't recover anything from the Pio since it stopped bouncing signals, but I had the Valor's systems skim any frequency that has so much as brushed up against our arrays. It's found two points of interest for us." 2 bright green dots appeared on multiple displays, as a dashed line

in a similar colour connected them. "These are signals with the encryption we use on a standard wrist terminal. As far as I know, it doesn't match the codes anyone on the crew had active, but it's not an insurmountable task to change those. Whatever emitted this, their devices or not, it was still active after all other transmitters were either destroyed, or disconnected from the Valor. I'm not sure what the purpose of these signals was yet, but I have a hunch that they're just a standard security protocol."

Alyssa's mug hit the carpeting, smacking into it with a thud. She hadn't noticed that her hands were shaking. Her grip wasn't what it used to be. Tea had spilled all across the floor, seeped deep into the carpeting. *Just another stain upon the cacophony of those from the past,* she thought, preparing to continue her response. Kylma was acting as if nothing had occurred.

"So, you're telling me that three hours ago, someone on the Pioneer decided to move in an accelerating vector across the continent? You don't just get up one day and decide to commit the greatest fucking act of teenage rebellion in recorded history."

"I wouldn't word it like that, but in essence, yeah. At least that signal has."

Alyssa buried her face deep within her hands. *And I had thought this would be a trivial question.* "Do we have visual confirmation on any of this?"

"Unfortunately, no. We don't have access to any of the good equipment from here, all of that is restricted to the command decks. There are too many clouds circulating to see anything with the visible light scopes anyway. Well, unless you're inclined to stare at an ocean of white wisps."

Alyssa raised from her seat. She reached over to the desk, and poured another mug of tea. It was lukewarm.

"I'm going to get some goddamn fresh air," she said. "Notify me when you find something of use, right now I'm not seeing anything conclusive." She turned to walk out the door, when Kylma cleared his throat.

"Sit tight for a minute, I was getting to the interesting stuff," he said. In an instant, the maps bloomed with shades of color. Most were shades of blues and purples, with some greens scattered throughout. Traced around a portion of the continent was a bright red blemish, not to

mention a dozen odd blooms from inside as well. The display lit up the room with a red hue, like a beacon demanding their attention. She tilted her head, looking at the map from another direction. A shiver ran up Alyssa's spine. This wasn't some odd Jiahvian landform, this was the view she had been staring upon for millennia.

"What is this? What did you find?" she asked, tripping over her words. Kylma didn't respond. "Well, spit it the fuck out."

"Those blemishes are showing particles emitted from the surface, specifically ones higher on the frequency spectrum. You know, x-rays, gammas..." He sighed. "I'm not sure how to go about saying this- It looks like something is making a lot of radiation, and I have no idea what it is."

Chapter 4

Alyssa

"So, when the Carthaginian Navy was met with a small Roman force on their own territory, what would you think occured?" Alyssa asked the class. She taught the primary students every other cycle in which they had classes, taking place of the regular Instructors. It was important to have real human interaction with the kids on a regular basis, even if the autonomous Instructors probably did a better job of it than she did. Not to mention, teaching kept her sane.

Paul raised his hand from the front of the class, for the umpteenth time. "How about someone who hasn't answered almost every single question this lesson." Alyssa said. The class erupted with giggles. She waited a few seconds, and no more hands were raised.

We've come to this, she thought. Scanning the room, none of the students stood out as particularly troubled, except for Elsa. The girl was in the back of the class, with red, curly hair draped over her face. She often held herself that way, seemingly to hide herself from her peers.

"Elsa, what do you think? Don't worry about getting an answer wrong, this is all just practice." She didn't move a muscle. "Come on honey, don't be shy," Alyssa said. In an instant, Elsa shot up from her chair, as if she were standing at attention in boot camp. Her hair flew wildly, exposing her blue eyes, and a sharp and concentrated expression. If her goal was to avoid the attention of the classroom, she hadn't done a very good job at it. Elsa paused for a few awkward breaths.

"They fought," she whispered.

"Yes! Good thinking, you've got that part down perfectly. Now think, how would they have gone about the fight? Try and reach back to what we've learned about the battles and other conflicts the Romans have fought so far." Elsa was so kind as to greet her inquiry with the sweet sound of silence.

Alyssa picked up the chalk from the lip on the bottom of the lowest board, and climbed a small ladder to reach her highest marks. She underlined a portion of her notations on the right-

hand board. "The Romans, they had a brand new navy. Not just ships, but the force as a whole. For all of their nation's existence up until this point, the Romans fought opponents from the land, on the land. They had very little experience in battles on the water." She kicked off the wall, moving the ladder on its rails to the left, and circled another portion of notations on an adjacent board. "The Carthaginians were born from the Mediterranean Sea, separating the continents of Africa, and Europe. Because of their position on the sea, the Carthaginian Navy was one of the best of its class in the known world. Their empire and culture were based on the entire ideal of shipping across those waters. Who in their right mind would pick a fight with them?"

"The Romans?" Elsa asked, after a short pause.

Alyssa let out a hearty laugh. "That's assuming the Romans were in their right mind, my dear." She thought she saw the beginnings of a grin through that red hair.

"So, Elsa, if you were a Roman General with all your tactics used to fight on the land, how would you go about fighting on the sea?" Elsa paused, as still as a marble statue. She seemed to be deep in thought.

"I... I would fight them on the land. The Romans would lose in the water, they couldn't beat the better Carthage Navy. But, they also couldn't go on the land, because the Carthage fighters wouldn't go there."

"Right."

"So, the Romans have to bring the land into the water, maybe? If the Romans could turn an ocean battle into a land battle, maybe they could win."

Alyssa clasped her hands together across her chest. "That is exactly right!"

Elsa's hair had pushed aside, her bright blue eyes shining as if they glowed. Her smile was beaming unlike anything Alyssa had seen in the girl. *Now I remember why I take the time out of my cycle to do this.*

"Just like you said, the Romans realized they had the advantage on the land, and not on the sea. To counteract this disadvantage, the Romans maneuvered their ships right up to the Carthaginian enemy, and lowered a bridge onto their ships called a corvus. The warriors aboard the Roman ships boarded the Carthaginian ships, and they could easily capture each instead of

sinking them by getting rid of the enemies inside. Does anyone know why this is particularly important?" Elsa, sitting down again, raised her hand. "Yes, Elsa?" She squirmed in her seat, seemingly still nervous to speak.

"Well, the Romans didn't have a good way to win, so, maybe they changed the rules of fighting so they could." By God, Elsa was strikingly intelligent for her age. *Looks like you're doing your job pretty alright, old lady.*

"More or less, you're right on the dot. The Carthaginians had the clear advantage in the battle, and instead of playing by the rules of naval warfare, the Romans used tactics the Carthaginians hadn't seen anywhere before. Essentially, the Romans changed the game, so they could turn the conditions for a loss into a win. That's the underlying lesson here. Got it?" A cacophony of assent filled the classroom.

Alyssa glanced up at the clock on the wall. It was only 5 minutes until the end of the period. "Alright, it's close to the chime. Now get out of my classroom before I give you all extra homework!" The students jumped up from their chairs and rushed out of the room, falling into conversation with their individual groups of friends. All the students, except Elsa.

"Thank you, for... you know," she said.

"Anytime honey, It's what I'm here for. Now move along, you'll be late for club." Through the mask of hair, her smile was unmistakable. "You've got five seconds before I find a new assignment to give you!" Alyssa shouted, with a sarcastic grin. Elsa quickly grabbed her things, giggling as she moved, and ran out the door.

Alyssa pulled down each board on their gimbal, erasing the chalk text with an overused block of fabric. The white particles drifted in the air, reflecting in the light, making their way toward the air processing intake. She sat down in a leather swivel chair behind a large, wooden desk, and released the tension in her upper body. "God, I need to work on my posture," she said aloud.

Tapping the screen of her wrist terminal, Alyssa spooled through her call list until she found Kylma. When she confirmed the call, he answered immediately, as if he had been waiting for her.

"Hey, Ally. What's the news?" he said, muffled by the static interference from the metal layering of the sanctum. She thought Kylma sounded a bit out of breath.

"That's what I called to ask *you*. Are the gamma radiation levels down planetside still up the ass?"

"Hold on a minute." From the audio feeding into the call, Kylma seemed to be tearing apart the room he was in. "Looks like it. We're seeing an average of a one thousand percent uptick in gamma particles compared to the normal surface levels we have on record."

"I have no idea what the fuck that implies. Is anyone going to die as a result?"

"Apart from a noticeable increase in cancer rate for people in the affected areas, I'm not sure it will be much of a problem for us. Anyone on the surface is gonna be sucking on tumors come a decade from now though, if this keeps up."

"Good to hear that we're not dying as I speak. I'm going to spend the rest of my cycle in the Core Library. If anyone needs me, you'll find me there."

"Got it. I'll see you around," he said. Alyssa's wrist beeped with the sound of a closed connection.

The wooden joints of the chair creaked as she rose, barely hanging on to life after ages of neglect in that classroom. Dusk had begun in the sanctum, as the light coming through the upper windows glowed an orange hue. As Alyssa strode out of the classroom, the ancient wooden floorboards sung a familiar tune of wear, surviving the weathering of countless generations' footsteps. The main passageway's arched glass ceilings streamed in the colors of the dimming central light rod in the sky. It still changed with the daylight cycle on Jiah, even though almost everyone on the Valor had never seen a sunset. The hinges of the large, wooden door to the primary academy cried out as she opened them, and Alyssa stepped into the breeze outside.

Walking along the wide paths of the sanctum, she could see the children playing in the trees surrounding the academy. On Jiah, she would have ushered the children down from the top branches to prevent them from falling to their death. In the sanctum's light gravity, most of their worries from a fall would be a bruise the next morning. To her right, a group of primary and secondary students were having football scrimmage out in an open field. As one of the players

spiked the ball a tad too hard, the entire team watched it fly up, past the dimming light rod, and onto the roof of a facility above them. One of the children offered to go get the ball, mounted a bicycle, and pedaled strenuously down the path.

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The Core Library was by far the biggest building on the entire vessel, stretching 11 floors upward, and 40-some more downward into the decking. The library stood out amongst the buildings of the sanctum, not just because of its size, but its appearance. Polygons of all shapes made up the outer structure, giving it the appearance of a partially rendered object in a simulation. Colored almost completely black, the building seemingly absorbed every beam of light which intersected with its walls. To compensate, a slight purple glow radiated from every surface, like some sort of passive radiation.

Alyssa walked up a flight of stairs leading to the main entrance, and grunted as she pushed aside one of the many huge doors leading inside. *I am going to have a word with whoever decided to make every goddamn doorway on this vessel a full body workout to pass through.* Inside, the appearance of the structure was much more human. The main hall of the library stretched to a domed ceiling, where an intricate chandelier clad with gemstones hung. Its bulbs shone a yellow light upon the space, giving the reflective stone floor a golden hue. Along all the edges of the hall, each of the stories could be gazed into. Past the intricate railings, books lined rows shelves layered across each floor, stretching on for what seemed like forever. Walking toward the lift, her footsteps rang across the space with a resounding echo.

The steel doors of the lift opened seamlessly, splitting at the centre and falling into the walls. The cylindrical elevator car was lined with bronze plating, engraved with a hilly landscape and accentuated rays of light splaying from a pinpoint sun. On the car's interactive panel, Alyssa pressed her hand against the glass pane. It scanned every crease and scar which she had accumulated over her years, and confirmed her identity with a satisfactory ting. She pressed a sleek button embedded next to the numerals "IX", and a gold color illuminated around its border. The car whirred, gliding along the rails which lead it toward her destination.

The car chimed, and Alyssa stepped outside into a labyrinth of literature. She was home. It was going to be a long trek to access the specific material she needed to find. It would have been vastly easier to just call a drone to retrieve it for her, but that defeated the entire experience of this building. Being lost in the shelves, engrossed in whatever book you happened to find by pure chance, it was blissful for someone like her.

Alyssa kicked the magnet breaks off a cart by the wall, and pushed it into the corridor. One of the front wheels was making an odd squeaking noise. Yet another small inconsistency to fix, that would almost certainly never be straightened out. Alyssa tapped on her wrist, and her system was already connected to the library's network. With a few brisk gestures, the screen on her wrist displayed a three dimensional map of the current floor. She tapped in a brief keyword, and the network began to trace locations through the appendages of the library. A voice rang out from the device. *Please turn onto aisle D9, and continue for 595 meters. Then, take a right onto shelving row D9-482.* "Well, it appears like I'm in for a long ass hike," Alyssa said. "My ankles won't forgive me for this."

If you didn't have a map on hand, anyone could easily find themselves lost in the library's hallways. She assumed that it had been designed with the thought that anyone willing to walk through the spaces had a map, or an incredibly advanced sense of direction. While walking down the winding corridor, its architecture felt more akin to an organism's structure than an educational institution. The way each corridor and shelf twined and interconnected with each other felt organic, symmetrical and completely randomized at the same time. On a grand scale, it was beautiful. In person, it was rather mundane. The shelves were crafted with a material with a similar consistency to wood, although certainly not natural wood. The walls were of the typical crystal-like substance which made up all the building's walls, illuminating the space with a purple glow. The cracks of the baseboards were laced with webs of spiders long passed away, and never needed to be cleaned. Artificial leather and fabric chairs were scattered sporadically throughout the shelves, but you could never be out of sight of one. All the lamps adhered to the walls were off, as you wouldn't need heavy amounts of light to navigate normally. It all appeared to be placed at random, but at the same time, so intricately precise.

Her wrist terminal buzzed as she passed an intersecting row of bookshelves. The sign embedded on the end shelf read, *D9-482 - Surface Construction Records*. "It's about damn

time," she said aloud, only to be heard by the listening ears of novels, journals, and scientific papers. She began to pull books, tapes, and binders off of the shelf. Drafts of buildings, plots of cities, technological records, all here at her disposal. With about three dozen items stacked on the cart, she switched on the motor assist, and began to push back toward the main corridor.

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"Indeed I do. I'll have it out to you shortly." The robot hummed to itself, shuffling over to a large brewing machine.

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were already seated around a large table. Reiko, president of the class, headed the table, with 4 officers flanking him on each side. Kylma, not formally a part of this meeting, was sitting in a chair off toward the wall. It would have been nonsensical not to invite him, as integral as he had been.

"Thank you all for coming at such an early hour. I know this is cutting into all of your work cycles today, but a meeting needed to be had," she said, partially out of breath. Alyssa wiped off her glasses, clouded with mist from her sweat.

"You're fine by me, Blondeau," said Reiko, at the head of the council table. His elbows were resting on the table to prop his head up, like he was at some boring lecture during a morning quarter class. "We've all had those days."

"I am *Professor* Blondeau, President Mengyou. This is a formal meeting, not a goddamn play date, please treat it as such." She had raised her voice too high, and frankly, she didn't care.

"Alright alright, nobody needs to get feisty," he said, enunciating his drawl.

Alyssa sighed. *Breath, and focus. There is no time for any stupid fuck-ups.* "I didn't mean to come off as apprehensive or angry. I'm under a lot of pressure at the moment."

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Reiko's shoulder again, hard enough to make him wince. Reiko shrunk down into himself, showing vulnerability behind the confidence he carried like a shield.

"I- I apologise. Please, continue," Reiko said, never looking up from the floor.

"Thank you, President Mengyou." Alyssa moved to gesture toward the entire room, as Kylma took his hand off a now trembling Reiko. "As you all most likely noticed, our schedules have gone a bit skewed in these past few days. That's my fault for not keeping the appearance of normality. I assure you, it won't happen again." She took a breath. *Here comes the hard part.* "Due to the near entire Senior Council being absent from their positions at this time, you are all my new temporary executive board. As such, you will all be provided with the powers and responsibilities which come with that title." Alyssa made a quick gesture on her wrist, and sent a data package to every person in the room. "I just sent all of you a copy of an archive recording the events of the last seventy hours. In a perfect world, I would have time to debrief every one of you. Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of time. Read every file in this archive by this point tomorrow. If you do not comply with these orders, I will partake full disciplinary action against any one of you, and consider possible expulsion from this committee. Are we clear?"

Looking up, the expressions on the faces around the table were a mix of raw shock and confusion. One of the boys, Jair, she thought his name was, stared at her slack-jawed. Kylma seemed to be vaguely amused at their peril.

"I said, are we fucking clear?" she spoke, enunciating each individual word. Slowly, Reiko began to nod his head. That was enough for her. "Good, I'll see you all in 30 hours. Get some rest tonight, you'll need it."

Alyssa turned, and pushed open the door leading out into the common area. She didn't look back. Walking down the brick paths toward the car park, Kylma appeared by her side.

"You really unleashed the lion on those kids, huh?" he said.

"Better they be scared of me and cooperative, than friendly toward me and lethargic." She poked Kylma's forearm. "Like a certain someone I know."

He put on a vaguely offended expression. "Me? Lethargic? Since when did you sit down and pour through thousands of external scope readings. I haven't slept more than an hour since all this shit started to go down."

"Yes, you've been my lord and savior, I couldn't have done any of this without you, blah, blah, blah. I am forever indebted to your spreadsheet navigational skills. Come by the Primary Campus later today and I'll give you a fucking stamp."

Kylma heartily laughed. "Sounds like a deal."

They stepped out from under the elevated pathway, separating campus from public space. Alyssa opened the door of her personal cart, and as if he were invited, Kylma slid into the passenger seat. When she looked up at him from inside the car, his demeanor had changed, the smile lines around his mouth disappearing. Alyssa closed her door, and started the cart.

"Regarding the radiation," he said, "I have some theories."

"Great. I'd love to hear each and every one of your mystic theoretical fantasies. First, though, I need you to listen to something. Turns out, I have been going through thousands of documents as well." Alyssa gestured on her wrist, and the speakers of the cart crackled to life. The screen in the centre of the cart's console flickered on, displaying a boot up symbol. "This recording is of Richard Jotsmoth. I'm sure you know of him."

"The old, dead scientist guy who worked for the old, dead government people?" His voice turned to a childish inflection.

"A primary student could have done a better job explaining him, but yes. Doctor Jotsmoth was head scientist of the Jiahvian Empirical Scientific Agency. I was going through some of his files before, I assumed he would have some data on occurrences like this. Turns out, I was right." Alyssa tapped a glowing circle on the screen, and a man appeared. His face appeared to be in mid-sentence, mouth agape, eyes fixated directly on the camera. The exterior of the console glowed blue, signaling incoming playback. It began.

"*-and out of our borders. The energy input needed to power every system is, needless to say, immense. Never in the history of humanity have we attempted to capture so much energy at once. Thankfully, with the artifacts, we have been able to harness an immense source of power.*

The underground structure we discovered, which I have dubbed 'The Constructor', seems to have a mechanism which creates, among other things, large sums of antimatter." The man gestured to the table he sat in front of. *"Now, for example, if I combined every particle of antimatter humanity has ever created and put it on this table, it would make a vaguely disconcerting pop, and a small burn mark on the aluminium. The Constructor can create that amount of matter nineteen times a second. Running it for a full 30 hour day cycle, we could create enough energy to power every city on this planet for years."* The expression on the man's face shifted from optimistic excitement, to something more sinister. *"There is, unfortunately, an issue. Radiation. Whatever, or whoever, made this technology didn't care too much about being irradiated. If I left this equipment running while standing just a kilometer away from it, I'd be the equivalent of molecular swiss cheese in under a minute. The amount of gamma radiation emitted from the process is staggering, to say the least. We won't be able to have it functioning safely without heavy shielding erected around the entire complex- shielding which could possibly break, and subject millions of people to lethal radiation dosage. Needless to say, I'm not enthusiastic about the prospect."* The man leaned forward, as if telling a secret only she could hear. *"The executive council might have other opinions regarding this. I believe that history will be on my side, regardless of the actions my superiors place upon me. Jotsmoth, signing out.*" The screen went black, signaling the end of playback.

"Well, shit," said Kylma.

"I know the feeling," Alyssa responded.

"So, what this doctor guy is trying to tell me, is that some sort of antimatter maker has fired up on the surface, despite the fact that we have never seen it before, at the same time we lose an entire crew? Because if that's what you're trying to tell me, I don't think I like it very much."

"Not exactly. The radiation profiles don't match the data that Doctor Jotsmoth took, but I can't shake that feeling that these events are linked. What even *does* this?"

"Ancient extraterrestrial antimatter makers, I reckon."

"No shit, Detective Armoton. Next to none of your theories holds up with these new recordings, I’m sure."

"Honestly, I think they might help my point."

What kind of absurd idea would he have formulated to stand up to evidence as damning as this? she thought. "And what would this so called ‘evidence’ be?"

"If they were performing the tasks listed on their itinerary, than I think we have a case to make." Kylma swiped on his wrist, pulling up a document. "This instruction, ‘Categorize any valuable artifacts’, might be our smoking gun. They may have wandered into this antimatter machine, accidentally started it somehow, and shot all of their electronics after doing so. Gammas like what we’re seeing now and in Jotsmoth’s recording just murder electronics, and on that point-” He stalled for a moment, and looked off into space. “Their users, too."

A shock sent up Alyssa's back, blooming into her chest. She felt as if she couldn't breath, and suddenly, the cart cab felt much smaller. She pressed her fingers against her temples, as if willing the fear away. “You don’t mean to tell me that you think my entire goddamn Senior class is dead on the surface of Jiah, melting in some fucking alien energy creator, do you?”

"It was always in the back of my mind. All electronics going dark? Not even a subtle trace of the Pioneer on the planetary surface? Total destruction is the last thing I want to consider, but we have to keep it in the cards. You know that." Kylma was now staring at her with an iron gaze. You had to know the man to see the dependability in those eyes. He had no mercy toward those which interfered in his ideals, but took no compromises with them either. It was a good combination, one that solved a whole lot of stubborn problems, if you were on his side.

"Yes. Yes, I do understand, but please allow me not to think about the fucking possibility of nearly a dozen students I've raised from birth being killed at the hands of something I cannot halt. I'd appreciate it."

"I think I can do that."

"Great. Now get the fuck out of here, and help me fix our issues."

“I think I can do that, too.”

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Document 20: Early Draft of Alpha Chapter 4

Created on December 11th, 2019. Last Modified on December 11th, 2019.

Note: This is a rough draft of Chapter 4 that was sitting in an odd spot in my Google Drive. It has some major and minor changes throughout.

"So, when the Carthaginian Navy was met with a small Roman force on their own territory, what would you think occured?" Alyssa asked the class. She taught the primary students every other cycle in which they had classes, taking place of the regular Instructors. It was important to have real human interaction with the kids on a regular basis, even if the autonomous Instructors probably did a better job of it than she did. Not to mention, it kept her sane.

Hudson raised his hand from the front of the class, for the umpteenth time. "How about someone who hasn't answered almost every single question this lesson." Alyssa said. The class erupted with giggles. She waited a few seconds, and no more hands were raised.

z1 *So, we've come to this,* she thought. Scanning the room, none of the students stood out as particularly troubled, except for Elsa. The girl was in the back of the class, with red, curly hair draped over her face. She often held herself that that, seemingly to hide herself from her peers.

"Elsa, what do you think? Don't worry about getting an answer wrong, this is all just practice." She didn't move a muscle. "Come on honey, don't be shy," Alyssa said. In an instant, Elsa shot up from her chair, as if she were standing at attention in boot camp. Her hair flew wildly, exposing her blue eyes, and a sharp and concentrated expression. If her goal was to avoid the attention of the classroom, she hadn't done a very good job at it. Elsa paused for a few awkward breaths.

"They fought," she whispered.

"Yes! Good thinking, you've got that part down perfectly. Now think, how would they have gone about the fight? Try and reach back to what we've learned about the battles and other conflicts the Romans have fought in so far." Elsa was so kind as to greet her inquiry with the sweet sound of silence.

Alyssa picked up the chalk from the lip on the bottom of the lowest board, and climbed a small ladder to reach her highest marks. She underlined a portion of her notations on the right-hand board. "The Romans, they had a brand new navy. Not just ships, but the force as a whole. For all of their nation's existance up until this point, the Romans fought opponents from the land, on the land. They had very little experience in battles on the water." She kicked off the wall, moving the the ladder on its rails to the left, and circled another portion of notations on an adjacent board. "The Carthaginians were born from the Mediterranean Sea, separating the continents of Africa, and Europe. Because of their position on the sea, the Carthaginian Navy

was one of the best of its class in the known world. Their empire and culture were based on the entire ideal of shipping across those waters. Who in their right mind would pick a fight with them?"

"The Romans?" Elsa asked, after a short pause.

Alyssa let out a hearty laugh. "That's assuming the Romans were in their right mind, my dear." She thought she saw the beginnings of a grin through that red hair.

"So, Elsa, if you were a Roman General with all your tactics used to fight on the land, how would you go about fighting on the sea?" Elsa paused, as still as a marble statue. She seemed to be deep in a thought.

"I... I would fight them on the land. The Romans would lose in the water, they couldn't beat the better Carthage Navy. But, they also couldn't go on the land, because the Carthage fighters wouldn't go there."

"Right."

"So, the Romans have to bring the land into the water, maybe? If the Romans could turn an ocean battle into a land battle, maybe they could win."

Alyssa clasped her hands together across her chest. "That is *exactly* right!"

Elsa's hair had pushed aside, her bright blue eyes shining as if they glowed. Her smile was beaming unlike anything Alyssa had seen in the girl. *Now I remember why I take the time out of my cycle to do this.*

"Just like you said, the Romans realized they had the advantage on the land, and not on the sea. To counteract this disadvantage, the Romans maneuvered their ships right up to the Carthaginian enemy, and lowered a bridge onto their ships called a corvus. The warriors aboard the Roman ships boarded the Carthaginian ships, and they could easily capture each instead of sinking them by getting rid of the enemies inside. Does anyone know why this is particularly important?" Elsa, sitting down again, raised her hand. "Yes, Elsa?" She squirmed in her seat, seemingly still nervous to speak.

"Well, the Romans didn't have a good way to win, so, maybe they changed the rules of fighting so they could." By God, Elsa was strikingly intelligent for her age. *Looks like you're doing your job pretty alright, old lady.*

"More or less, you're right on the dot. The Carthaginians had the clear advantage in the battle, and instead of playing by the rules of naval warfare, the Romans used tactics the Carthaginians hadn't seen anywhere before. Essentially, the Romans changed the game, so they could turn the conditions for a loss into a win. That's the underlying lesson here. Got it?" A cacophony of assent filled the classroom.

Alyssa glanced up at the clock on the wall. It was only 5 minutes until the end of the period. "Alright, it's close to the chime. Get out of my classroom before I give you all extra work. Scram!" The students jumped up from their chairs and rushed out of the room, falling into conversation with their individual groups of friends. All the students, excluding Elsa.

"Thank you, for... you know," she said.

"Anytime honey, It's what I'm here for. Now move along, you'll be late for club." Through the mask of hair, her smile was unmistakeable. "You've got five seconds before I find a new assignment to give you!" Alyssa shouted, with a sarcastic grin. Elsa quickly grabbed her things, giggling uncontrollably as she did, and ran out the door.

Alyssa pulled down each board on their gimbal, erasing the chalk text with an overused block of fabric. The white particles drifted in the air, reflecting in the light, making their way toward the air processing intake. She sat down in a leather swivel chair behind a large, wooden desk, and released the tension in her upper body. "God, I need to work on my posture," she said aloud.

Tapping the screen of her wrist terminal, Alyssa spooled through her call list until she found Kylma. When she confirmed the call, he answered immediately, as if he had been waiting for her.

"Hey, Ally. What's the news?" he said, muffled by the static interference from the metal layering of the sanctum. She thought Kylma sounded a bit out of breath.

"That's what I called to ask *you*. Are the gamma radiation levels down planetside still up the ass?"

"Hold on a minute." From the audio feeding into the call, Kylma seemed to be tearing apart the room he was in. "Looks like it. We're seeing an average of a one thousand percent uptick in gamma particles compared to the normal surface levels we have on record."

"I have no idea what the fuck that implies. Is anyone going to die as a result?"

"Apart from a noticible increase in cancer rate for people in the effected areas, I'm not sure it will be much of a problem for us. Anyone on the surface is gonna be sucking on tumors come a decade from now though, if this keeps up."

"Good to hear that we're not dying as I speak. I'm going to spend the rest of my cycle in the Core Library, if anyone need me, you'll find me there."

"Got it. I'll see you around," he said. Alyssa's wrist beeped the sound of a closed connection.

The wooden joints of the chair creaked as she rose, barely hanging on to life after ages of neglect in that classroom. Dusk had begun in the sanctum, as the light coming through the upper windows glowed an orange hue. As Alyssa strode out of the classroom, the ancient wooden floorboards sung a familiar tune of wear, surviving the weathering of countless generations' footsteps. The main passageway's arced glass ceilings streamed in the colors of the dimming central light rod in the sky. It still changed with the daylight cycle on Jiah, even though almost everyone on the Valor had never seen a sunset. The hinges of the large, wooden door to the primary academy cried out as she opened them, and Alyssa stepped into the breeze outside.

Walking along the wide paths of the sanctum, she could see the children playing in the trees surrounding the academy. On Jiah, she would have ushered the children down from the top branches to prevent them from falling to their death. In the sanctum's light gravity, the most of their worries from a fall would be a bruise the next morning. To her right, a group of primary and secondary students were having football scrimmage out in an open field. As one of the players spiked the ball a tad too hard, the entire team watched it fly up, past the dimming light rod, and onto the roof of a facility above them. One of the children offered to go get the ball, mounted a bicycle, and pedaled strenuously down the path.

The Core Library was by far the biggest building on the entire vessel, stretching 11 floors upward, and 40-some more downward into the decking. The library stood out amongst the buildings of the sanctum, not just because of its size, but its appearance. Polygons of all shapes made up the outer structure, giving it the appearance of a partially rendered object in a simulation. Colored almost completely black, the building seemingly absorbed every beam of light which intersected with its walls. To compensate, a slight purple glow radiated from every surface, like some sort of passive radiation.

Alyssa walked up the flight of stairs leading to the main entrance, and grunted as she pushed aside one of the many huge doors leading inside. *I am going to have a word with whoever decided to make every goddamn doorway on this vessel a full body workout to pass through.* Inside, the appearance of the structure was much more human. The main hall of the library stretched to a domed ceiling, where an intricate chandelier clad with gemstones hung. Its bulbs shined a yellow light upon the space, giving the reflective stone floor a golden hue. Along all the edges of the hall, each of the stories could be gazed into. Past the intricate railings, books lined rows shelves layered across each floor, stretching on for what seemed like forever. Walking toward the lift, her footsteps rang across the space with a resounding echo.

The steel doors of the lift opened seamlessly, splitting at the centre and falling into the walls. The cylindrical elevator car was lined with bronze plating, engraved with a hilly landscape and accentuated rays of light splaying from a pinpoint sun. On the car's interactive panel, Alyssa pressed her hand against a glass pane. It scanned every crease and scar which she had accumulated over her years, and confirmed her identity with a satisfactory ting. She pressed a

sleek button embedded next to the numerals "IX", and a gold color illuminated around its border. The car whirred, gliding along the rails which lead it toward her destination.

The car chimed, and Alyssa stepped outside into a labyrinth of literature. She was home. It was going to be a long trek to access the specific material she needed to find. It would have been vastly easier to just call a drone to retrieve it for her, but that defeated the entire experience of this building. Being lost in the shelves, engrossed in whatever book you happened to find by pure chance, it was blissful for someone like her.

Alyssa kicked the magnet breaks off a cart by the wall, and pushed it into the corridor. One of the front wheels was making an odd squeaking noise. Yet another small inconsistency to fix, that would almost certainly never be straightened out. Alyssa tapped on her wrist, and her system was already connected to the library's network. With a few brisk gestures, the screen on her wrist displayed a three dimensional map of the current floor. She tapped in a brief keyword, and the network began to trace locations through the appendages of the library. A voice rang out from the device. *Please turn onto aisle D9, and continue for 595 meters. Then, take a right onto shelving row D9-482.* "Well, it appears like I'm in for a long ass hike," Alyssa said. "My ankles won't forgive me for this."

If you didn't have a map on hand, anyone could easily find themselves lost in the library's hallways. She assumed that it had been designed with the thought that anyone willing to walk through the spaces had a map, or an incredibly advanced sense of direction. While walking down the winding corridor, its architecture felt more akin to an organism's structure than an educational institution. The way each corridor and shelf twined and interconnected with each other felt organic, symmetrical and completely randomized at the same time. On a grand scale, it was beautiful. In person, it was rather mundane. The shelves were crafted with a material with a similar consistency to wood, although certainly not natural wood. The walls were of the typical crystal-like substance which made up all the building's walls, illuminating the space with a purple glow. The cracks of the baseboards were laced with webs of spiders long passed away, and never needed to be cleaned. Artificial leather and fabric chairs were scattered sparradically throughout the shelves, but you could never be out of sight of one. All the lamps adhered to the walls were off, as you wouldn't need heavy amounts of light to navigate normally. It all appeared to be placed at random, but at the same time, so intricately precise.

Her wrist terminal buzzed as she passed an intersecting row of bookshelves. The sign embedded on the end shelf read, *D9-482 - Surface Construction Records*. "It's about damn time," she said aloud, only to be heard by the listening ears of novels, journals, and scientific papers. She began to pull books, tapes, and binders off of the shelf. Drafts of buildings, plots of cities, technological records, all here at her disposal. With about three dozen items stacked on the cart, she switched on the motor assist, and began to push back toward the main corridor.

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"You're fine by me, Blondeau," said Reiko, at the head of the council table. His elbows were resting on the table to prop his head up, like he was at some boring lecture during a morning quarter class. "We've all had those days."

"I am *Professor* Blondeau, President Mengyou. This is a formal meeting, not a goddamn play date, please treat it as such." She had raised her voice too high, and frankly, she didn't care.

"Alright alright, nobody needs to get feisty," he said, enunciating his drawl.

Alyssa sighed. *Breath, and focus. There is no time for any stupid fuck-ups.* "I didn't mean to come off as apprehensive or angry. I'm under a lot of pressure at the moment."

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"Better they be scared of me and cooperative, than friendly toward me and lethargic." She poked Kylma's forearm. "Like a certain someone I know."

He put on a vaguely offended expression. "Me? Lethargic? Since when did you sit down and pour through thousands of external scope readings. I haven't slept more than an hour since all this shit started to go down."

"Yes, you've been my lord and savior, I couldn't have done any of this without you, blah, blah, blah. I am forever indebted to your spreadsheet navigational skills. Come by the Primary Campus later today and I'll give you a fucking stamp."

Kylma heartily laughed. "Sounds like a deal."

They stepped out from under the elevated pathway, seperating campus from public space. Alyssa opened the door of her personal cart, and as if he were invited, Kylma slid into the passenger seat. When she looked up at him from inside the car, his demeanor had changed, the smile lines around his mouth disappearing. Alyssa closed her door, and started the cart.

"Regarding the radiation," he said, "I have some theories."

"Great. I'd love to hear each and every one of your mystic theoretical fantasies. First, though, I need you to listen to something. Turns out, I have been going through thousands of documents as well." Alyssa gestured on her wrist, and the speakers of the cart crackled to life. The screen in the centre of the cart's console flickered on, displaying a boot up symbol. "This recording is of Richard Jotsmoth. I'm sure you know of him."

"The old, dead scientist guy who worked for the old, dead government people?" His voice turned to a childish inflection.

"A primary student could have done a better job explaining him, but yes. Doctor Jotsmoth was head scientist of the Jiahvian Empirical Scientific Agency. I was going through some of his files before, I assumed he would have some data on occurrences like this. Turns out, I was right." Alyssa tapped a glowing circle on the screen, and a man appeared. His face appeared to be in mid-sentance, mouth agape, eyes fixated directly on the camera. The exterior of the console glowed blue, signaling incoming playback. It began.

"-and out of our borders. The energy input needed to power every system is, needless to say, immense. Never in the history of humanity have we attempted to capture so much energy at once. Thankfully, with the artifacts, we have been able to harness an immense source of power. The underground structure we discovered, which I have dubbed 'The Constructor', seems to have a mechanism which creates, among other things, large sums of antimatter." The man gestured to the table he sat in front of. "Now, to for example, if I combined every particle of antimatter humanity has ever created and put it on this table in front of me, it would make a vaguely disconcerting pop, and a small burn mark on the aluminium. The Constructor can create that amount of matter *nineteen times a second*. Running it for a full 30 hour day cycle, we could create enough energy to power every city on this planet for years." The expression on the man's face shifted from optimistic excitement, to something more sinister. "There is, unfortunately, an issue. Radiation. Whatever, or whoever, made this technology didn't care too much about being irradiated. If I left this equipment running while standing just a kilometer away from it, I'd be the equivalent of molecular swiss cheese in under a minute. The amount of gamma radiation emitted from the process is staggering, to say the least. We won't be able to have it functioning safely without heavy shielding erected around the entire complex- shielding which could possibly break, and subject millions of people to lethal radiation dosage. Needless to say, I'm not enthusiastic about the prospect." The man leaned forward, as if telling a secret only she could hear. "The executive council might have other opinions regarding this. I believe that history will be on my side, regardless of the actions my superiors place upon me. Jotsmoth out." The screen went black, signaling the end of playback.

"Well, shit," said Kylma.

"I know the feeling," Alyssa responded.

"So, what this doctor guy is trying to tell me, is that some sort of antimatter maker has fired up on the surface, despite that we have never seen it before, at the same time we lose an entire crew? Because if that's what you're trying tell me, I'm not certain that I like it very much."

"Not exactly. The radiation profiles don't match the data that Doctor Jotsmoth took, but I can't shake that feeling that these events are linked. What even *does* this?"

"Ancient antimatter makers, I reckon."

"No shit, Detective Armoton. I'm guessing next to none of your theories holds up with these recordings."

"Honestly, I think they might help my point."

What absurd idea could he have formulated that stands up to evidence as damning as this? she thought. "Oh?"

"If they were performing the tasks listed on their itinerary, than I think we have a case to make." Kylma swiped on his wrist, pulling up a document. "See this? *Categorize any valuable

artifacts*. They may have wandered into this antimatter machine, accidentally started it, and shot all of their electronics after doing so. Gammas like that just murder electronics, and on that point, their users too."

A shock sent up Alyssa's back, blooming into her chest. She felt as if she couldn't breath. Suddenly, the cart cab felt much smaller. "You mean to tell me that- that..." she said, trailing off into a murmur. She pressed her fingers against her temples, as if willing the fear away.

"It was always in the back of my mind. All electronics going dark? Not even a trace of the Pioneer on the surface? Total destruction is the last thing I want to consider, but we have to keep it in the cards. You know that." Kylma was looking at her with an iron gaze of she knew was dependable. He had no mercy toward those which interfered in his ideals, but took no compromises with them either. It was a good combination, if you were on his side.

"Yes. Yes, I do understand, but please allow me not to think about the possibility of nearly a dozen students I've raised from birth being killed at the hands of something I cannot stop. I'd appreciate it."

"I think I can do that."

"Great. Now get the fuck out of my cart, and help me fix our issues."

Document 21: Novella One

Created on March 28th, 2020. *Last Modified on April 1st, 2020.*

Note: A draft for what seems like an offshoot of the story. Maybe a short story occurring in the same universe with little mainline implications?

Basic Concept

A group of 5 friends makes plans to make their biggest adventure to date- climbing to the peak of Mount Ebutskov, the highest mountain in Chraini-Sevyr. Two of the group members carry cameras, and four carry journals. A tragedy occurs as they reach the summit, one unexplainable by the forensic scientists in Chernoye. This story is told not by a narrator, but the evidence collected from the camp and bodies of those who died, along with the summaries of autopsies, photos of the bodies and the ruined campsite, and reports by those involved with the case, including detectives and journalists. The mysterious cause of their deaths was falling space debris from an explosion which occured in orbit, one detailed within the Forgotten Dreams main series itself.

Characters

- **Member 1**
    - The natural leader of the bunch, loud and takes the head. Keeps a journal mostly detailing actions of the group on their trek.
- **Member 2**
    - Reserved and blunt, currently dating 3. Keeps a “journal”, but very blunt and short entries on scrap paper.
- **Member 3**
    - Outgoing and social, currently dating 2. Keeps a journal and camera, with most photos involving social situations with the group.
- **Member 4**
    - Happy and polite. Keeps a polaroid camera with notes on the photo chin, but no journal formally. Takes many photos of landscapes and wildlife for 5.
- **Member 5**
    - Reserved and quiet, but very intellectual. Keeps a journal mainly detailing observations he made regarding his surroundings, but has photos included from 4’s camera.

Document 22: The Forgotten Dreams Recycling Bin

Created on November 11th, 2019. Last Modified on May 13th, 2020.

Note: I believe this is unused text that was originally going to be in the Alpha and Beta documents, but was removed from those texts. A ton of text was outright deleted, but I saved these for some purpose. Maybe to use later or reference? I'm not sure.

Exiting the preparation room and into the main hall, the wafting scent of a potato-based stew replaced that of the oil. Who's day was it to cook again, Czcibor's or Nikolay's? He secretly hoped it was Czcibor, as although they were both fantastic cooks as compared to himself, Czibor seemed to have considerably more kitchen knowledge from the few weeks they all had spent together. Peering into the galley, it was Nikolay tending to the stovetops. Bubbles and vapor were steaming out of the largest pot.

"Smells delicious, what's on the burner?" Zeljko asked.

Nikolay turned, seemingly surprised by his sudden arrival. The old doctor's mutton chops were particularly sticking out at that moment, and condensation from the humid kitchen air formed droplets on his bald head. After removing his eyeglasses and wiping condensation from the lenses, Nikolay finally recognized him.

"Good afternoon, Zeljko. If you had wondered, our next meals will be potato and beef stew, straight from the general's powder. We've run ourselves nearly dry of non-preserved meal options," Nikolay responded. He turned back toward the stovetop, and twisted each of the dials to the left.

"Fortunately for you, it's nearly done. The stew just needs some time to cool. Come and get a container of your own, you must be starving."

"You're damn right I'm starving, but Rabinovich wants me up in operations faster than my legs can carry me. I'll come back down for a container when she's finished."

"Oh please, don't worry. I was feeling lunch in operations anyhow." Nikolay took the ladle from the pot and began to pour stew into several steel bowls. Entering the kitchen, Zeljko took two of the serving platters from one of the lesser worn shelves, and placed them on the counter. Five bowls were filled with piping hot stew to the brim, and both men placed

Novel begins with Captain Kuwana trapped in a labyrinth made by the ancients, with all of her crew dead. Queue a flashback to how the Pioneer was scuttled and their electronics fried after an attempted coup by other officers on the mission. To shelter from a thunderstorm the remaining crew, under Captain Kuwana, descended into the ancient labyrinth. While exploring, one of her crew turned on a reactor which gruesomely killed all outside of a radiation shelter, which only Kuwana was in. The crew members died of typical high radiation poisoning, as most

of their DNA was likely obliterated. The shortest exposed took 2 days to pass, and the longest exposed nearly melted within hours. Kuwana is stuck because she cannot turn the reactor off from inside the shelter, and cannot exit or she would have a death sentence of radiation poisoning almost immediately. The shelter is large, and has a few rooms. All the amenities to sustain human life beyond shielding radiation have gone, so she has no food and very little water. She reads some of the documents inside of this shelter to pass the time, not finding much use. These documents reveal the character of Richard Jotsmoth, who was highly involved in the construction of the reactor in its present state. Kuwana tears apart the inside walls of the reactor, trying to find something to ping the Valor with. A cold hand taps her shoulder. Her crewmate, Ginji, and her closest friends, has been seemingly resurrected. His eyes and skin radiate a ghostly lavender shade. Kuwana is initially mortified, but Ginji assures her that everything is fine. If anything, Ginji is more confused than Kuwana about their situation. They formulate a plan to have Ginji exit the radiation chamber, as he is seemingly immune to the radiation outside, and they can turn off the reactor together communicating vis shorthand radio. Ginji finds the large radiation shelter closest to the reactor, which seems to have the main controls. As he works on the reactor, it begins throwing error codes. The reactor goes into shutdown mode as a result of these, but as it does so, the magnetic bottle begins to fail. Kuwana remembers this from the papers she read written by Jotsmoth, and frantically runs to begin tearing through papers. She finds the protocol to prevent magnetic bottle failure, and begins reading it to Ginji. In a moment, the entire world tore apart. Kuwana didn't notice when she died.

Statistically speaking, most adult humans have a considerable fear of being locked in a small space for a prolonged period of time. For someone who had spent their entire life in a glorified tin can pressurized with air, a fear such as that should have never even been considered to be a factor. Yet, here was Yuwa Kuwana, scared shitless in a shelter surrounded with particles that, within minutes of contact, were sure to warrant a visit from the Angel of Death. At this point, she welcomed him.

Four days ago, Kuwana had spoken with the old woman at home. “I need you to take this job, because not a single fucking person in your rank will swallow the god damn toad," she said. "Being captain doesn’t mean shit on surface runs, you know that better than I do. Whenever I put Kylma on as captain, he acts like he's taking a holiday to some isolated beach. Now that he's *actually* on holiday, I've got no one to take the role. You’re more than capable of executing the worst tasks I could ever giving, so don’t go fuck this one up." Add that one to the ever growing cabinets of bullshit.

Not a day’s time had passed before the Pioneer was stocked and ready for descent. The Pio was ancient, and probably had more replaced and repaired parts than what initially came on the ship. Out of the eight P-Class vehicles initially shipped from the surface, the Pio was one of two ships that remained functional. Nevertheless, she flew time and time again.

1929. A micro black hole swings by the planet Earth, knocking it off its axis. The north pole of the planet ends up resting in northern Louisiana, bringing huge climate change and extreme water level rises all over the planet. Human civilization is devastated, over a billion people die. Left with a chaotic planet which would not be treating them well anytime soon, humanity looked toward the stars. However, with their lower technological sophistication, it was perplexing how the people living at that time thought they would reach them. With hard work and international collaboration with the League of Nations, some form of order returned to the globe. Scientists from Germany were the first to make the breakthrough in rocket technology, successfully accidentally launching a manhole into space in 1954. In 1972, man reached space. Technology and civilization had a general increase for the next hundred years. In 2186, a corporation looked toward the stars. The corporation we now know as Kapteyn Industries wanted to reach out past the solar system, to find better markets elsewhere in the universe. The corporation spent nearly all of it's net worth commissioning a huge starfaring vessel, The Valor. It was unlike anything built before, by far the biggest single connected structure man had ever made. Shaped like an oversized corn dog, the Valor has a large cylinder stretching down it's center. This cylinder could rotate, providing artificial gravity to its inhabitants. The cylinder was filled with fields, parks, places of business, and public buildings. However, most business class residence was not inside the cylinder, but in the gravity-less tiny rooms and halls that surrounded the exterior of the ship. The Valor's destination was the 1st rocky planet in the Kapteyn star system, aptly named Kapteyn b. Located nearly 13 light-years away from the Earth, it was a relatively short trip, just a few hundred years. During this time period, technical errors had struck The Valor. With no way to turn around or get help, the passengers had to make due with what they had, and it did not work. Most went into the cryosleep terminals, but those too were malfunctional. Turns out humans weren't so ready for a multi-century star-spanning expedition after all. On arrival to Kapteyn b, there were less than 200 passengers still alive out of the many many thousands which embarked on the journey. Of course, Kapteyn Industries wouldn't be stupid as to let the expedition have a chance of failing, as long as the Valor could keep flying. Stashed on the ship were tens of thousands of embryos, which kept the mission well supplied with people to do their bidding. Of course, the heads of Kapteyn Industries were healthy and well upon arrival, eager to begin ordering the building of this new civilization. The remaining passengers and corporate heads took several mass passenger ships down to the ground, and began to set up a small camp along the coast of the peninsula. This camp slowly grew into a town, and quickly into a city. This massive city was eventually named Atama, and served as the capitol of this vastly growing empire. From the outside, Atama looks like any hyper-modern city, with huge skyscrapers with incredible feats of architecture, aside from one feature. A huge spire, appearing like huge cables spidering from the ground upward, soared upward from the skyline and out of sight. This is the only space elevator on Kapteyn, and connects directly to the Valor. The 2nd tallest building, behind the space elevator in height, is the Centre of Industry, serving as a capitol building for the corporation, and thusfore the empire. Inside of the Centre of Industry was the Executive Board, consisting of 7 oligarchs. These 7 individuals controlled all happenings

inside the corporation. Of course, they did have some assistance in governance. Every settlement with more than 10,000 members could apply for a mayorship, and upon acceptance, could send a representative to Atama. These representatives could propose laws to be voted on by the Executive Board. The mayorship positions were just a way to make the populace believe they had say in the law, and for the Board to gauge whether some laws actually needed to be passed. The Board also maintained control over the judicial system, being the highest court in the land. This governmental system is important to note, as it was critical to the collapse of the empire. The empire continued to grow throughout the continent it was first founded upon, spreading much further north than Atama was (imagine the distance between Panama and Yukon). In response to this rapid growth, the Executive Board ordered an immediate inquiry into how to transport people and resources between these far off cities. At that time, the only efficient way to do this was by aircraft, more often spacecraft that just never left atmosphere. To find a better way to solve this issue, the Board opened a new branch of the government, the Imperial Science Department. Initially, only 2 were permitted in the department, Dr. Jotsmoth, head of department, and Dr. Varsto, vice head of department. Dr. Jotsmoth is a very excitable person, who is always eager to jump into a problem. He is very charismatic, pretty cute, and pretty much always dresses in either golf clothes or a lab coat. Dr. Varsto is a much more strict and firm character, completing every task he is given quickly, and efficiently without question. Contrary to Jotsmoth's outbursts of excitement, Varsto keeps a stone cold face, even in the most prestigious of victories. When given the task of solving the issue of transportation, they came up with a magnetic high speed rail system. The tracks and cars were so cheap to make, that the Executive Board gave permission to Jotsmoth and Varsto to expand it further, connecting every single town in the empire which had a population of more than 2,500. After this, the department was expanded with more staff. What began as an inquiry to find out how to solve existing issues, the ISD began to proactively create new technology. Collaborating with people back on Earth was an issue, however. It took 25 and a half years to send a message from Kapteyn to Earth and back again. Instead of directly speaking, both planets just actively exchanged information, at a nearly 13 year delay both ways. There had been colonies established on other planets closer to Kapteyn, but most were religious or ethnic groups not too worried about advancing science. In the time since the Alyssa left Sol, some radical changes occured to human civilization around it's home star. A Dyson Swarm had almost finished construction by this time, and with the technology developed would be able to transport humans into a digital world. Their brains would be scanned and modeled, and in essence transporting the person into a digital image of themselves. There they would live out their lives in this digital paradise, powered by an immensely powerful computer made possible by the Dyson Swarm. Since perception of time could be edited in this virtual space, the people inside could live for previously inconceivably long periods of time. For every 3 days of real universe time, a person in this virtual space would experience a year of time. When this computer was finished, and people began to move into the system on droves, the ISD watched carefully to observe what would occur. After 4 months, 95% of the human population in the Sol system were absorbed. The only people not absorbed were

stragglers who refused to make the jump, and the millions living in the outer solar system who were too far away for efficient absorption. 17 years after the computer was completed, the ISD received a notification that all eligible citizens had been absorbed. 2 weeks later, Kapteyn received it's last transmission from officials in the Sol system. According to some of the 4.2 million who were not absorbed, the entire Dyson Swarm had been shut down, and it's contents erased. The computer itself however, was still intact. The unbelievable power of this computer was about to be used for the bidding of evil. An organization of unregistered roamers, people who lived in spaceships or asteroids and never registered with any government, invaded the control room which was held by the only officials left in authority. Once they had taken this room, they met face to face with the computer. The roamers asked, "Our mission is to obliterate the universe. Tell us how we can accomplish this." The computer sat idly. "Affirmative," the computer responded. It paused for a second. "But it will take a bit." It was now the roamers' turn to idle. "How long will it take you to complete your answer?" the leader of the roamers asked. "Hmm…" the computer pretended to think for a while. "About 9 thousand years," it responded. The roamers were understandably shocked and infuriated, slack jawed. "What do you all want me to do, give you a big laser pointer and stick you on a ship for Alpha Centauri? If you want to destroy the universe right you're gonna have to let me think about it. Now scram." And as such, the roamers let the computer think about it. The scientists back on Kapteyn had no clue about any of this hubbub, but they were receiving automatic debriefing transmissions from the computer as it slowly uncovered the answer. In these transmissions, the scientists uncovered some incredible data. Among some of the more mundane experiments and equations, the computer had already solved one of its most critical questions, how does one create their own universe? It uncovered that by smashing 2 protons together at a fraction less than lightspeed, a rip can be made in our universe, leading to another. This rip can be forced apart and enlarged to where even spaceship sized objects can pass through. The only issue is that the critical laws of physics that govern in our universe are not the same in all others. When a spaceship or any other particle from this universe passes into another, it could potentially be ripped apart or critically changed. The ISD immediately created an experiment to test this hypothesis. Using an admittedly hastily built particle accelerator, a gateway was opened to another universe. It appeared spherical in shape, with a sort of fisheye effect from the gravitational lensing around its circumference. Upon sending inside a small probe with some sensors and a camera, the probe immediately turned into nothingness. It would take many many trials to finally find a universe compatible with laws like ours. This universe they eventually found was empty and dead, despite having laws of physics close to our own. Upon closer examination by probes, the scientists found that that universe was trillions and trillions of years old, so old that all particles had decayed, and black holes had evaporated. There was nothing left but a blank canvas. As more trials were conducted, hundreds of these types of universes were found. They were by far the most common type; old, empty, dark, lifeless. It was around this time, about 6 years after the first transmissions of the multiverse discovery were heard, that the government had another problem it needed the ISD to solve. The citizens of Kapteyn were becoming irritated and angry at their government,

who did not allow them basic freedoms like speech, press, religion, etc. Along with these freedoms, the people were also faced with a separate problem entirely, overpopulation. The oligarchs had wanted to only populate a specific region of Kapteyn, just one large portion of a continent. However, with the rapidly growing population, they were beginning to run out of space in this region. Instead of letting the populace expand outwards over the oceans and north pole, the oligarchs restricted their ability to move outwards, marking a border where people could not cross. Of course, people still crossed this border. Initially these people could be contained with seeking military units, but the mass of people moving across became so great this stopped being effective at all. This is where the ISD came in, how to contain or eliminate a large mass of people over a large area. Jotsmoth and Varsto were unsure of what to do, as this violated every ethical guideline they were inclined to follow. Unfortunately, under imperial rule, you don't quite get a say in what you want to do. Both leaders decided to come up with their own tactics, and would come back together and decide which one they would prefer to use. After much time, they presented their ideas to each other. Dr. Jotsmoth wanted to build a wall, not one made out of stone or a fence, but something closer to a force field. Once you cross this forcefield-like barrier, your memories would be completely erased. On top of this, your vocal abilities would also be ceased, not allowing you to speak to anyone. Dr. Varsto drafted plans for a bioweapon. This bioweapon would take over the body of its host, knock it unconscious, and decompose its body extremely quickly. In essence, once activated, the host would fall unconscious to the ground, and melt into a puddle. Painless for the host, and very effective. No one would have to be killed in Jotsmoth's plan, and would have a very high chance of turning anyone away who would dare cross. Varsto's plan was much more lethal, and would kill any who crossed the border intentionally. The 2 spoke, and could not come to a conclusion on who's would be utilized. Jotsmoth was too much of a pacifist, and would not directly kill anyone by his own hands. They came to an agreement to send both plans to the Executive Board, and have them decide which plan was optimal. However, the board sent both back, approving them, and ordering their immediate construction. Jotsmoth's wall was easy to create, the neurotical technology was already heavily in use. Varsto's weapon was another story. Creating a bioweapon with a kill switch, on top of the features Varsto wanted equipped on it, would be an extremely difficult task. However, Jotsmoth proposed that they use his already existing nanobot technology and modify that just for this use. Jotsmoth's nanobots were a feat of engineering, being smaller than a typical human cell, and being able to work in coordination with millions of other nanobots to accomplish a task. In Jotsmoth's private lab far north, just a few miles from the border, he was busy heavily testing this technology in most of his spare time. One of his most impressive prototypes was a functioning robot using the nanobots, successfully using them like "cells" in a singular unit. Jotsmoth performed trials on this robot, testing the capabilities of the technology. With some modification by Varsto, these nanobots were now able to become killing machines. Once inside the body, the nanobots took over a very small amount of cells so the immune system would not trigger, and used the body's own resources to reproduce. They would then spread throughout the body harmlessly, eventually being released into the air and onto surfaces. The

nanobots would find another host, and the process would repeat. Once all the law violating citizens were infected, a kill switch would be activated. At that point toxins would be released from all of the nanobots, knocking the host unconscious, and breaking apart the chemical bonds in their body, effectively melting the host into a puddle of biomass in a matter of minutes. The technology was approved by the Board of Executives, and was set to be released over a camp on the other side of the border as a test trial. Both Varsto and Jotsmoth were very hesitant about this. Along with the technology being untested on this scale and extremely new, the nanobots were not fully finished. Their designs had left room for a global positioning sensor, so every host could be monitored. This way, the scientists would know whether the nanobots had spread to the inside of the empire or not. This sensor was not included in that version, as the scientists had not figured out how to program the body's cells to produce them yet. With no choice in the matter, Jotsmoth and Varsto executed the trial. A barrel of the nanobots was slowly dumped from an aircraft over the camp, showering the inhabitants. The experiment was planned to last 3 days, giving the nanobots double the time they would need to spread to all inhabitants. However, the Executive Board vetoed this. They extended the experiment to 2 months. Both scientists found this absurd. Why would the board decide to make such an idiotic decision? Unfortunately, they had no say in the matter. All they could do was hope. 6 weeks after the experiment began, and a week and a half before the deadline, Jotsmoth was running a blood test on one of the lower ranked scientists. He found the nanobots in their blood. He tested every since scientist in the ISD, including himself, and found the same nanobots. The entire continent had to have been infected by this point. Jotsmoth alerted Varsto, and they immediately made moves to cancel the experiment and find a way to disable the nanobots. Unfortunately, there was no such way. As long as there was 1 host for the nanobots to multiply in, there would be a ticking time bomb on humanity. So, Jotsmoth decided to work on a "cure", something to disable the receptors on the nanobots so they couldn't execute their death program. After nearly a week of continuous work on the project, he finished. There wasn't enough time to dose the population, however. As a last ditch effort to at least somewhat preserve humanity, Jotsmoth had him and Varsto quickly inject all 128 members of the ISD with the vaccine. 7 hours later, at the stroke of midnight, Kapteyn's first empire went out with a whisper. Upon waking the next morning, the ISD members found it odd they were no longer receiving comms messages from headquarters. Jotsmoth and Varsto knew all too well. They told the members what had occurred, and it was likely they were the only people on Kaptyen left to tell the tale. A couple laughed in disbelief. A few immediately broke down and cried for their loved ones. Most remained still, and silent. However, there was 1 group of uninfected individuals. They had already crossed a large ocean barrier, even with the restrictions those people had. These 14 individuals would be responsible for the entire upbringing of the globalization of humanity. The scientists never knew this.

Vince Hawkes is a detective in the City of New Sigsbee, the 2nd and largest of the Triumvirate Cities. He's a short man, coming in at about 4'11". He claims he's 5'0". He also has a rounder shape, at about 87 kilos. Vince wears a dark gray, short, wool trenchcoat. It has a mustard stain that won't come out. Underneath this is a black vest with a dark blue bowtie, and a

set of wrinkled dress pants. On his feet, he wears a pair of leather sandals, with black socks. On Vince's head, he wears the typical fedora, although it is quite large for his size. His face is easily obscured by the hat, and we don't see what it looks like for the entirety of the novel. However, 2 aqua eyes shine through the hat's shadow.

Vince is lazy. Absurdly lazy. I'm not quite sure how he even still holds this detective gig. Despite being lazy, Vin is somehow the most efficient and reliable detective in New Sigsbee, mostly because literally no one else wants to take the job. Crime is rampant, and gangs run loose without fear of police resistance. It's hell for a good cop. Luckily for Vin, he isn't a very good cop. That is his strategy, after all. There's a point where you pass inadequacy, and transcend into a different plane, one of complete lethargy. This is where Vin resides. Even counting his laziness, you had to admire Vince's skills at problem solving, and being able to read a person like a book. When he was able to overcome that weakness, Vin could solve a case like no other. Literally like no other, because there is no metric to even compare him to.

Vince's office is on the 14th floor of the Keystone Tower, a building outside the main business district of New Sigsbee. The door is made of heavy mahogany, with a large frosted window in the centre. On the window, letters read the word "detective." in all lowercase. Inside his office, it is dark, illuminated only by a singular lamp and the sun coming through the window shades. The back window is large, and takes up the majority of that wall. The floor appeared wooden, with small planks. Lining the walls were huge wooden bookshelves, full of large textbooks and files. In the very centre, on top of a circular magenta carpet with gold embroidery, a huge mahogany desk sits. Papers are piled on top of the desk, but a nice gap in the centre is placed for Vin to lay his feet. In front of it, 2 leather chairs. Behind was a larger swivel chair, with a velvet texture. The whole place is a massive fire hazard.

Over a thousand years had passed since the last notification came in, and Alyssa Blondeau was fed up with it all.

Day after day, she stared at that wretched screen. Sure, it was impressive, wrapping around the entire control room of the vessel, but it would have been great if something would actually change on it. No point in a screen that doesn't do jack. Still, like clockwork, every day she observed the maps and statistics for any sign of change along the border. As per usual, today had no important readings. Alyssa pushed herself away from the control deck, floating through the open quarters door and into cramped maze of brightly lit passageways which made up the administrative sector of the vessel. She took a long, deep breath, and closed her eyes for a brief moment. She relaxed the tension in her shoulders, as the purring of the air circulation system massaged her ears. She cherished her short moments of bliss. At the end of the hall, Alyssa reached an elevator towards the main sanctum. The doors shuttered as they moved, she made a mental note to oil them sometime before eternity ended. As the elevator car made its way through the kilometers long tube, Alyssa was greeted with the sweet sensation of weight upon her feet. After hours of floating, it was very welcome. The car jolts to a stop, as a bell rings. As

the doors attempted to open themselves, the cold air of the sanctum rushed in to greet her. She stepped out of the elevator car and onto the luscious grass of the sanctum. The view from here almost never got old. The plain of grass extended up, continuing in a ring all around the cylindric cavity of the sanctum. The sanctum spins, giving the feeling of gravity to those on the inside perimeter. The sun, contained inside a copper reinforced glass done, shined light all throughout the cavity. Forests of pine trees are spread across the surface, weaving around the buildings, paths, and fields. Most of the buildings in the sanctum are wood and concrete structures, the only exception being the medical centre. Linked by concrete paths made for foot traffic or light vehicles, the buildings were not too spread apart. Most served an educational purpose, the entirety of the sanctum was more or less a school after all. As if right on queue, a voice shouts, "Professor Blondeau!" Alyssa jerks her head around to greet the person behind her, but alas, no one is there.

Document 23: Forgotten Dreams, Beta

Created on December 27th, 2019. Last Modified on May 10th, 2020.

Note: This was a second draft of the story that I began after the ending of National Novel Writing Month. It was supposed to fix many errors, but didn't get off the ground.

Prologue

Yuwa Kuwana

A woman lost among a sea of things in which would drown her, particulates which lacked much care for the proper function of mitosis.

As her arrival was forthcoming, every fiber of her being was stressed and construed, all according to plan. Those who fell under her command saw otherwise. As their vessel touched the surface, a chorus of uprising sang through the barracks. A dozen of her crew ripped her from the harnesses, slashing at her chest in a desperate attempt to possess control. She sought otherwise. Turned a broken fragment, she fled into the labyrinth where once laid a mystery. The coup d'etat had concluded a moment after it began, and Napoleon she was not.

Her body had been festered with cancer, and she mothered a headless anole.

Her kin not gone but against her, she resists the urge to shout.

She persists.

She reaches toward Mother, toward God. The piercing shriek of deafening silence brims her ears with deception. She screams. The weapons, the walls, the machinery, the reactor, the corpses- they do all but listen. Alas, the machinations of the labyrinth obey none but the fathomless inner workings of the Universe.

Despite it all, she persists.

She wheezes in an attempt to speak, and began heaving from the lungs. Black liquid splatters on the steel at her feet in the pale shadow of her torso. It does not matter. She hoists her back up, head hanging directly in the view of the damned. "Take me," rasped Captain Kuwana, "My time here has come to a close."

Chapter One

Zeljko Osvobodi

In hindsight, it seemed rather obvious Zeljko Osvobodi would find himself wedged between the hulls of the most powerful vessel created by man.

When the great nations of Chraini-Sevyr signed the Grand Sevyrian Treaty to close their endless war of greed, the ball had already been set in motion. His home nation of Chernoye, just one of the several sovereignties inhabiting the relatively small peninsula of Chraini-Sevyr, never much liked keeping peace anyhow. As such, when Chernoye's Senate revolted and deposed their Head Minister, the much-anticipated follow-up of the war to end all wars was inevitable.

The decades abandoned factories roared to life, and the machine of war reared its head. Of course, the technology from the Great Sevyrian War would not suffice after the technological developments of the past decades. The nation had to seize the power and mind of its youth, and propel the elite to victory with a newfound cannon fodder. In this pursuit, Chernoye would create an array of highly specialized academies, training these children to perform their predetermined task. One of these children was Zeljko. Enlisted in the engineering academy, as a young boy he assisted the greatest minds of the time to build what would become the Crawlers; a fleet of massive armored vehicles capable of transporting hundreds across the desolate frozen tundra which surrounded them. These Crawlers, in essence, enabled the warring nations to conduct naval warfare on flat, vast expanses of land, changing the conduct of war forever to come.

Nearly a decade into the war, the military scientists of Chernoye discovered an opportunity which no sane officer could dismiss. A new technology, one kept secret from all but top officers and the men who created it, could very well tip the war in their favor. The neighboring nation of Svyetlapki, a powerhouse of industry for the enemy bloc, was on treacherous footing. Just one small stroke and control of the push forward would be theirs. At a quick pace, Chernoyan top officials put together a high-risk plan to deliver this weapon to its destination. In their search for the few which would command the hearse, with reasoning unbeknownst to all, Zeljko was chosen to be the sole dedicated engineer on board. And thus, he was now tasked with the undesirable position of the grim reaper's repairman.

He saw a little poetry in that.

"Osvobodi, are you goddamn deaf? If you keep ignoring me for so long I may as well declare you dead," Rabinovich said, her voice tearing through the handheld radio's tinny speaker. Zeljko clenched together the remaining disconnected wires with his elbow, and nearly began to bend over before knocking his head on the inner hull. Another painful reminder of being nearly crushed between two immovable walls. He kicked around the radio until a small tone alerted that he was transmitting.

"Yes, I read you clear. It's hard not to hear you in such a narrow space, or anywhere else for that matter," he responded.

"I don't need shit from the peanut gallery today. How far have you progressed on repairing the sensors? We're practically blind up here,"

Zeljko tugged on a white wire, tangled within the mess of electrical equipment within the walls. The outer rubberized cloth coating of the wire was blackened from some sort of a minor recent fire, and seemed to have melted the copper where it occurred.

"That looks like it just might be our problem."

"Osvobodi, what the hell is up with you? Are you alright down there?"

Zeljko kicked the radio behind him, and shoved it up against the back wall hoping for the transmitting tone to occur, but no such tone came. After stripping and cutting the white wire in the area it had melted, he twisted the copper insides through a wire nut so they would begin to communicate once powered.

"I'

Moving his ankles in an awkward fashion, Zeljko shimmied down the corridor toward the fuse switch. As his right foot snagged on the radio's handle, he began to fall- only catching himself on one of the searing bronze pipelines running along the inner hull. Gloves did happen to be very useful once and awhile. Swinging open the fuse box, he flipped the main switch to resume power to the sensory array. By the box, a previously unlit bulb flickered green. He jammed his heel onto the radio.

"How was that for a status update?"

The radio only sang back static for a long few seconds.

"It appears that the sensors are all in working order so far. Preliminary diagnostics are coming back green, no issues as of yet. Come up to operations for a final review. Rabinovich, signing off." The anger in her response was softened both by her own restraint, and the terrible speakers of the radio unit. She would have almost sounded pleasant to someone who didn't know her.

"Understood. I'll be over at haste."

Zeljko continued down the passageway toward the ascending ladder, his toolbox and radio scraping against the ground. Both were tethered to his waistband, making work in such a confined area slightly easier. Reaching the ladder, he began to scale up the hull one foot over the other. The latch opening to the aft deck was dense, and took considerable force to open. The air pressure suddenly popped in his ears as the sharp, freezing air suddenly nipped at every exposed area of skin on his face. The wind whipped the tethered radio, and if not for the attachment

would have gone flying into the white. Zeljko, barely moving forward against the force of the wind, trudged across the steel of the deck and threw his body into the open preparation room. Flipping the large switch at the other end of the room, the open door closed and sealed automatically. The thick steel and concrete of the walls reduced the deafening scream of wind to a dull vibration, perpetually echoing through the Crawler's bones.

He placed the toolbox and radio inside the electrical repairs locker, all of which lining the walls were caked with frost from the air previously dense with water vapor. Taking off his Extra-Vehicular Uniform, the smell of oil and sweat coursed through the small room. Designed to preserve human life for hours in the brutal cold of the northern mountain ranges, EVU's were closer to a vehicle in and of themselves than your typical indoors or infantry uniform. Consisting of just two pieces, a helmet and bodysuit, it was simple and quick to properly equip in an emergency. To him, their only flaw was that the white and tan coloration of the EVU was extremely susceptible to stains, as his uniform had a coloration closer to the color of snow left on a curbside for weeks.

Zeljko entered the main hall, which stretched down the backbone of the vehicle. The space seemed almost uncanny with no one occupying it, as he had been used to the sight of bustling halls inside Crawlers with standard occupancy. With less than a dozen people commanding a vessel meant to house over a hundred, it was rather easy to walk around the entire ship without running into a single person. Replaced with the sound of machining and gunfire was the quiet, constant hum from the engine 2 decks below. The operations room was placed directly at the end of the main corridor, and as such, Zeljko took a left and entered the galley.

The scent of red meat and savory roots wafted out of the door, the humidity noticeably increasing around him. An outtake vent must have been shut, he'd take a look at that later. Turning the corner toward the kitchen, Nikolay was standing by the stove, tending to a pot of boiling stew.

"Smells great, what's on the burner?" Zeljko asked.

Nikolay turned, seemingly surprised by his sudden arrival. The old doctor's mutton chops were particularly sticking out at that moment, and condensation from the humid kitchen air formed droplets on his bald head. After removing his eyeglasses and wiping condensation from the lenses, Nikolay finally recognized him. He was sharp, so long as he could see.

"Good evening, Zeljko. Tonight's menu will consist of a hearty stew of potato and dried meat, prepared in a vat of our finest recycled urine. It seems the only non-preserved additive currently remaining in storage is the potatoes, and even those are running thin," Nikolay said, rubbing the back of his head in apparent annoyance.

"Don't you worry, the folk back in Kamianske do a great job of packing food to last. I bet I've eaten more food out of their factory than the traditional stuff."

“Despite that, I can’t help but feel its quality differs from the traditional product. It lacks a certain weight, or texture that non-preserved foods have.” Nikolay sighed, and flipped the ladle in his hand.

“It doesn’t matter anyhow. The stew is nearly cooled, could you help me portion it out?”

“Sure thing Doc. Rabinovich wants me up in ops pronto, I’ll take a platter with me when I go.”

“Oh, no no. I’ll accompany you, I’d like to speak to Captain Bukharin regarding some matters of importance.”

The door into ops was wedged open with a stapler, presumably to attempt to let fresh air inside. Upon stepping into the room, it was warm with body heat, the scent of tobacco smoke and sweat permeating throughout. The small windows to the front were white with frost, and combined with the smoke, made the room seem dark to the point his eyes needed to adjust.

“Hey folks, how are the comm sensors working?”

Rabinovich glared at him with eyes of stone from her position at the comms system, huddled against the left side of the room. From the corner of his eye, Captain Bukharin leaned against the portside wall, smoking a cigar.

“Nikolay and I brought stew for everyone. It’s, uh, beef and potato. He should be here in a moment.” Zeljko placed the platter of stew onto a nearby table.

No one in the room acknowledged him, leaving the hums and clicks of various instruments to respond.

“Is everything alright?”

“Rabinovich,” Bukharin said, exhaling smoke, “debrief him.”

“Yes sir.”

She shuffled

“The moment our communication receivers came on-line, along with dozens of other messages, we received an SOS alert which broadcasted from the north-east of our position at about 45 kilometers. Although the language track is read as an unknown, it seems to be in standard Sevyrian script.”

She handed Zeljko a packet of transmission records, loosely held with a paperclip.

“Here, see for yourself.”

Received by: CRW-0038c

Transmitted from: Kamianske, National Weather System Headquarters

Language Path: Chernoyan

Subject: NWS Alert, Blizzard Warning

Date: Imperial Year 137, 07/21, 08:59

Text of Message: This is an emergency alert broadcasted from the National Weather Service in Kamianske, Chernoye. A blizzard has been determined to be moving in a south-easterly vector at approximately 36 kilometers an hour, north of the Kikutske mountains. Affected areas should expect up to a possible meter of snow, and 50 kph winds. Provinces to yield warning at this time: Novoskoy, Sterkarsk, and Gelenlad. More alerts to be posted at 12:00. END OF MESSAGE.

Received by: CRW-0038f

Transmitted from: Kamianske, Army Command Centre

Language Path: Chernoyan

Subject: General Update

Date: Imperial Year 137, 07/21, 09:40

Text of Message: One significant conflict has occurred in the past 15 hours. Two enemy vessels have been destroyed in a battle approximately 70 kilometers north of the Novoskoy province's international border with unclaimed territory. No Chernoyan or allied vessels were lost. There have been no recorded notable Chernoyan losses over the past 15 hours. There are no urgent messages active at this time. Victory is ever closer to being won. We salute and pray for those who have fallen today, yesterday, and throughout time. Those who deny thine self to serve the Chernoyan people will forever be remembered in the hearts of all. END OF MESSAGE.

Received by: CRW-0038b

Transmitted from: Kuski University -> Relay at Kamianske

Language Path: Sevyrian -> Chernoyan

Subject: Seismic Activity in Northern Sevyr

Date: Imperial Year 137, 07/21 09:51

Text of Message: Researchers at Kuski University have concluded that the tremors recorded on seismographs across the northern portion of Sevyr from 26:00 to 26:30 were the result of tectonic activity, and not warfare related causations. The fault lines running through the north polar region are prone to seismic activity akin to this event, and is no concern for further alarm. Other such similar incidents have been correlated to avalanches, rockslides, and sinkholes. Take precaution by avoiding valleys and cliffsides directly below large accumulations of snow or boulders, and avoid treading in places with loose ground. As aftershocks may be a possibility, it is recommended to take these precautions for up to a week from any significant tremors. END OF MESSAGE.

Received by: CRW-0038a

Transmitted from: UNKNOWN

Language Path: UNKNOWN

Subject: SOS as7ej8

Date: Imperial Year 137, 07/21 10:47

Text of Message: SOS. THE VESSEL [Svyetlapki Army Corps. Zver Class, ID 0018] HAS TRIGGERED AN EMERGENCY BROADCAST SYSTEM. THIS IS NOT A DRILL OR TEST. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS MESSAGE, AND ARE WITHIN DISTANCE OF THE COORDINATES [-18.38473, 42.38291], YOU ARE OBLIGATED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW TO DIRECTLY ASSIST THOSE IN THE AFOREMENTIONED LOCATION. THE TRANSMITTING VESSEL HAS BEEN INCAPACITATED, AND THOSE ABOARD IT ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER. THIS MESSAGE WILL REPEAT INDEFINITELY. SOS. THE VESSEL…

The transmission repeated for dozens of pages, before abruptly cutting off.

The Grand Sevyrian Treaty guaranteed that any entity, regardless of nationality, could send an SOS signal and be treated in accordance by its signatories with the humane guidelines set within itself. Of course, a treaty is only a wad of paper. Therefore, it was not often that SOS signals were transmitted in wartime. The general stance of those in a crisis was to stay silent, as an enemy could possibly dispose of any weak survivors, and salvage confidential information from the wreckage. It was considered that the loss of hundreds in disaster would be favorable to losing cities- not to mention entire wars- by enemy salvage. For those receiving a signal, it was a possibility that a rather cruel enemy could rig an explosion to occur on the supposed site in

distress. Despite all this, there had still been several successful instances of distress signals which ended in no such occurrence on both sides of war.

"This is… not good," said Zeljko.

"Wonderful work, detective. This transmission ran for just over an hour, so not outside the realms of what a typical emergency generator could supply a receiver like this," she said.

"So what are we going to do about it? Roll on by, knock on their door, and check up?"

Rabinovich took a breath to respond before Captain Buhkarin interrupted her.

"Yes," he said, "That is exactly what we are going to do." He flicked the butt of his cigar into a nearby waste chute within the wall, and approached the comm desk.

"You've got to be god damn kidding me Buhka."

"I am not. Our Chief Executives have radishes for brains, and they shouldn't have assigned a sensible captain for one for their personal errands."

"If nothing comes of this, we will log it as a detour due to obstruction from an ice storm. We are still days within the confines of our schedule, and no one on this vessel will see any disciplinary action taken against them due to my actions as captain. Do you understand?"

Rabinovich stalled for a moment, never losing eye contact.

"Yes. Yes, I do." She reached for the communication microphone, and flipped one of the orange switches on the nearby console.

"Navigations, this is Rabinovich in operations. Do you read?"

On the other end of the line, a thunk signified the toppling of a pile of binders.

"My lord, you scared the dickens out of me. This is Czibor, what's the problem?"

"We need a timeframe for a detour to the coordinates -18.38473, 42.38291. Run those numbers up for us and report back to ops as fast as possible."

"Wait, please, why exactly are we going so far out of our way in such a remote place?"

"I'll tell you when you've got me an answer. Ops signing off."

She flipped the switch back off, and the speaker feedback cut before Czibor could say anything more.

"Draft a transmission to send in the direction of the distress signal, in the event there is anyone to respond. This is all regular procedure, treat it as such."

"Yes sir."

Articulating Bukharin's wishes in standard code was no easy task, and you could hear her frustration in the taps of the transmitter as she sent the message away. Minutes later, Zeljko heard the tapping of quick footsteps from the hall. In an instant, the hatch burst open with an out of breath Czibor clutching a wad of paper, and what was presumably a rolled map.

"13 hours... ah, will certainly… get us close," he said, between gasps of air.

Czibor released the materials on a nearby desk, dropping them from a considerable height. Bukharin briefly skimmed each paper, seeming to be transcripts of land surveys from decades earlier. He unfurled the map from the leather strap holding it in place, and draped it over a disused radio console. A red line, presumably their planned path, ran across the canvas, and a hastily drawn inked line diverged from the path, twisted around mountains to their northeast, and approached the source of the signal from a valley, marked with a pin.

"Czibor, you're certain that there is no way to approach this location from the west, or south?"

"Yes sir, absolutely certain. The area surrounding the point in the transmission is much too steep to approach in a standard crawler like this one. If you were looking to call for another crew in a more nimble vessel to go investigate, I'd consider it."

Bukharin paused for a moment, and turned toward Zeljko.

"Osvobodi, you've done routine maintenance on our excursion vehicle, no? How is it looking?"

"I haven't made any repairs, but the last I took a look at her she was running slick as a whistle. If you're looking to use her, she can take us a few dozen kilometers on a full tank."

"Good to hear. With the skeleton crew we're running, I can't have more than a quarter of our people at risk outside the vessel." Buhkarin turned toward the group now huddled in the small space they all currently occupied.

"Stoycho, I need you geared up with weaponry for combat from a standard field scenario to close quarters fighting. Nikolay, prepare with medical equipment as you see fit, enough to sustain three people. Osvobodi, strip the excursion vehicle of the front and back turrets, and perform every system check in our books. I can't be certain we won't face combat, so we must prepare as if there will be. Unless our situation changes, the three of you will be our rescue squadron." Buhkarin pointed toward the map, and ran his finger along the northern mountains until stopping abruptly. "Here. Czibor, what is this point? The altitude looks remarkably low."

"Oh yes, that looks to be the Krakostvy river basin. It is one of the lowest points in this area, especially around these mountainous ridges. Unfortunately, I doubt our tiny excursion vehicle could make it on the thin strips of boulder lining the river."

"It must be frozen at this temperature, any body of water back home would be solid in these conditions."

"The river itself has only frozen a sparse amount in our records, and only in severe cold… you may risk it if you'd like, but I would never take the chance.."

Buhkarin looked toward the wall to his left and thought for a moment before returning his attention to the map. "To the north of the signal's origin, directly on the line you drew for a best possible approach, is a valley only a few kilometers in width, and to my understanding, with cliff faces on both sides. Any military leader with his head screwed on half-right could determine this location his best opportunity for a lethal maneuver. Whether he shoots artillery to collapse the walls of the valley, or moves on both sides to crush the enemy before they can turn and retreat, it's a death sentence to whoever comes in through that gap. The only other entrance to that area is from the east, and far north enough where it would be near impossible for our forces to get inside without being detected, and obliterated. Therefore, if my thinking is correct, if this signal were to be some sort of trap, what we have here would be a near perfect scenario. On the other hand, if there is a genuine crisis at foot, their forces cannot reach them for days after we could."

Buhkarin made a vague gesture at Czibor, prompting a response.

"Y-yes, I do see that as being very plausible,"

"Good. So

Chapter Four

Alyssa Blondeau

You're everywhere in the universe, but not terribly much. You're as right there as you'll ever be.

Document 24: Forgotten Dreams Comprehensive Progress Document

Created on December 28th, 2019. Last Modified on July 31st, 2020.

Note: This is the final large document detailing the story, planning for the writing of the Beta document, and is the most up to date out of all of the documents. Although it is unfinished, it holds many of the story's best ideas. It is the swan song of Forgotten Dreams, if you will.

Structure

Main Storyline - Forgotten Dreams. Seperated into volumes and issues.

- Volume One
    - Issue One: Prologue and Chapters 1-5

Storyline

Zeljko arc 1: Distress call heard, goes to investigate. Mission ends in an explosion, and the Crawler is destroyed. He, Nikolay, and Stoycho are left from the crew, Stoycho gravely injured and Nikolay tending to her.

Outlines

Prologue

Begins with Kuwana hiding in a storage closet. Establishes the emotions and fear she is feeling. Go back to how she got into the predicament, with the coup of the mission by the others, and attempted threat on her life. She has a gunshot wound in her gut, and used gauze in the closet to stop bleeding. The next parts of the prologue detail her condition in the following hours and days, not directly specified the exact intervals of time, but giving an indication of time passing. Ultimately, this prologue should detail Kuwana accepting her death and using it as a tool to, in her eyes, eliminate the chance of the coup ever succeeding.

Chapter 1 - Zeljko

Description of the war, and then twist. Zeljko is going about fixing some parts in the narrow space between the outer armor and innards. Driving through extremely tight spaces in the mountains ended up causing a small collision, which severed one of their sensors. Conversation takes place, and the sensor comes online. Zeljko is called up to operations, gets debriefed on an

SOS call received while sensors were down. XO says that they should proceed by the course, captain says they will make a diversion.

Chapter 2 - Alyssa

Chapter begins with Alyssa halfway through interrogating a maintenance worker regarding stolen equipment. Kylma is in the corner by the door, bouncing comments off of her. You get a general idea of the offense committed, Alyssa tells him off and he leaves.

Alyssa calls down to the surface, second officer of the expedition. Says the captain is currently offline due to her participation in an attempted coup. Says that 2 others allied with her have gone deep into the ruins, which is the reasoning for them going deeper and previously determined. Alyssa encourages this action for the time being, although completely blindsided by Kuwana's betrayal. Alyssa runs an analysis on the happenings, and is determined to find the truth. She claims to Kylma that it's all part of their political games. Alyssa leaves Kylma behind to run numbers, exits the governmental building and into the nave, and travels to the chancel to both get privacy and data not accessible anywhere else. Kylma calls, and says that something has indeed gone wrong.

Chapter 3 - Zeljko

Commander says that Nikolay's plan would take precedent as the small craft could get to whatever was left of the enemy forces first. Commander assumes that it was probably a mechanical failure and the enemies are vulnerable to attack. Nikolay, Stoycho, and Zeljko board the small craft and detach from the main vehicle. They go to the wreckage, where the vessels seem intact but not moving. On closer inspection, there seems to be gaping holes from where something had pierced their diesel engines. There are no living remnants of humans, and through the freshly fallen snow, anyone who had died even an hour beforehand would be nearly invisible. Stoycho and Zeljko head inside one of the wreckages looking for anything that could prove useful, or "help" (take prisoner) any men inside the vehicles. Nikolay stays in the small craft as he is the pilot. They walk through the vehicle examining the different rooms until coming across the engine room with the hole. They find the direction in which the thing which punctured the ships must have come from the opposite of main vehicle's direction, due north. The hole goes through the heavy duty plating and melted the metal, a technology not available to their country. They have the realization that something destroyed those vehicles which could endanger the main vehicle. There had to be a third party implicated. They run out of the vehicle and to the small craft. As they are doing this, gunshots from their vessel can be heard. Radio calls back to navigator Stoycho pushes the vessel as fast as possible in the direction of the main vehicle, and they see smolders of it through the veil of snow. The vehicle is at risk of exploding, as it is

carrying the ultimate weapon. They make a beeline away from the vehicle at the Captain's request. Vehicle explodes on radio, eerie silence, white flash, shockwave. It's nukes baby!!

Chapter 4 - Alyssa

Chapter 5 - Zeljko

Last one of the three to awaken. Nikolay is mostly unharmed, with a noticeable gash on his forehead. Zeljko was again mostly unharmed, but with a broken left arm. Stoycho was pinned underneath the craft. Her thigh was destroyed by the treads, showing bone and quickly bleeding out. Nikolay, being a skilled medic, retrieved medical tools from his belt and began working on removing the destroyed limb and cauterizing the vessels.

Characters

Confirmed Characters in Novel

- Zeljko Conager Osvobodi
    - Male, Chernoyan Sevyrian, 5’11”, 19 years old.
    - Wrestles with internal depression and anxiety, external high tolerance level to stress to a certain point, mechanical engineer, toned but not overly muscular figure,

- Anastasia Mondi Stoycho
    - Female, Chernoyan Sevyrian, 6’0”, 22 years old.
    - Very quiet, Laconic “Spartan” way of speaking, specializes in long range weaponry (rifles, mortars, etc), always the last (wo)man standing, high tolerance level to stress, unintentional dry humor, toned but not overly muscular figure,

- Nikolay Ludwig Nevena
    - Male, Chernoyan Sevyrian, 5’5”, 59 years old.
    - Ironic and pun driven sense of humor, has a background in science and mathematics, high tolerance level to stress, signs of what used to be muscle but is now gut although still packs a punch,

- Kaeti Okamiru
    - Female, Scandinavian Ethnicity - Born in Post-Colonial Rural Chraini, 6’2”, 41.

-
    - Kaeti was born into a family in the town housing the headquarters for the Mail Program [Name wip]. She made the decision to become a part of the Mail by Air program, and left the family farm to enroll. A natural leader and hard worker, she quickly rose up through the ranks of the program. At the age of 26, one of the youngest in history, she became the President of the Mail Program, effectively ruling the subcontinent of Chraini. Upon taking control of the program, she restructured the program to usher in a new era of progress and prosperity for those who cooperated with them. What she also found was that there were radio signals, odd ones which were not coming from the continent

- Alyssa Blondeau
    - Female, Latin American Ethnicity - Born aboard the Valor, 5’6”, 32 years old.
    - Struggles with anxiety and self-imagery, extremely functional under stress, not highly experienced in her job as compared to her predecessors, knowledgeable in academic studies in particular the humanities, natural leader and teacher, snarky and sarcastic humor, gets easily flustered but fails to show it, major resting bitch face, in shape but not muscular figure, very forgiving and benevolent,

- Kylma Armoton
    - Male, Germanic Ethnicity - Born aboard the Valor, 6’3”, 32 years old.
    - Always the last man standing, extremely high tolerance level to stress, tone-deaf but humorous humor, serves as Alyssa’s anchor, knowledgeable in STEM based sectors, extremely easy going to the point of worrisomness, only remaining member of the Senior sector, has a resting smile, a very big man with wide shoulders, used to be muscular but has grown a belly with age, a benevolent figure toward those he sympathizes with and a malevolent one to those he doesn’t,

- Yuwa Kuwana
    - Female, Asian Steppe Ethnicity - Born aboard the Valor, 5’9”, 21.
- Misc. Platoon Members
    - Bukharin: Commander
    - Czcibor: Light Ground Gunnery
    - Rabinovich: Second Officer
    - Niewski: Navigation
- Richard Jotsmoth
    - Male, Slavic Ethnicity - Born in Tricity, Poland, 6’0”, 60’s when doing most of his work for science, currently deceased.

- Adelyn Nyckemil
    -
- Chaya Dagsmirs
    -

Unconfirmed/Dropped Characters in Novel

- Shinii
- Reiko Mengyou
- D.W. Hertig
- Liutprand Kepler
- Alban Varsto
- Vince Hawkes
- Orion

Soundtrack: Name - Inspiration

1. Captain's Plight - Chopin Prelude E Minor
2.
3. Snowy - Undertale Yellow Snowdin structure, Vivraldi Winter chords
4. Chernoyan - USSR Anthem, 2011 Rugby US Anthem
5. Cupola Tea - Satie Gymnopedie No. 1, Claire de Lune, Liebestraum No. 3
6.

Important Stuff

The Collective Synthesis of Human Thought

As the human race grew greater in technological prowess, it began to reach the boundaries in which it could expand. Several corporations sent motherships to distant stars in search of a new home, but for the vast majority, they began to look inward. A cloud of solar collectors, popularly dubbed a “Dyson Swarm”, were constructed surrounding Sol in order to harvest a magnitude of energy never seen before by humans. As there was an excess of energy, a vast computer began to be constructed on the remnants of Mercury, which was mostly deconstructed to build this solar collection facility, to simulate a universe in which humanity could explore themselves further. The physical universe was limited, bound by the laws under which all had to abide. Inside a universe of their own design, the humans of that time saw an opportunity to create something only imagined in fiction. This computational intelligence was named *Human Thought.* This computer had no preexisting contentions, of course. It instead made decisions based on the sum of its parts. By surveying the collective consciousnesses of those integrated with it, Human Thought could easily perform tasks and make informed

decisions. Upon completion of Human Thought, the collective intelligence of the Solar System slowly began to trickle into its system. An individual could upload their memories and consciousnesses directly into Human Thought, eliminating the need for a body or physical world at all. Over the decades, the flow of uploaded consciousness began to turn from a trickle to a steady flow. Seemingly at once, the catalyst broke as the economy and inner workings of the physical world collapsed. Even the Earth's largest megalopolises appeared to be relatively empty. The vast oceans of space turned over to pirates and terrorists, as innocent millions lost their lives in a war with no one to fight on their side. It was now an obvious decision to enter Human Thought, as it was the only choice civilized humanity had left to take. Only seven years after its completion, the United Nations and Planetary Bodies announced its formal closure, as there was not a soul left to fight under their banner. From this point forward, the Solar System was ruled by pirates in a perpetual battle with themselves over worthless plunder. At this point, the entire project seemed to be performing extremely well. Inside the computer, its perception of time had been clocked up to the point where a month of real time roughly equated to a decade of real time. The conscious entities inside the computer still experienced time as they had before, however, the outside world seemed to imperceptibly pass. Many technological and psychological achievements had been made losing the limits of the physical universe, though most of those could still be applied to it. But, as most things do, nothing lasts in harmony forever. A gamma radiation blast from a nearby supernovae impacted the Solar System eighty-three years after the final conscious upload to Human Thought, momentarily shutting off its systems. The main physical structure of the computer was not heavily damaged, except for a small short in the primary central processing unit. In any other place, this would have been negligible. Here, it meant everything. Human Thought was no longer able to correctly portray its simulated universe. The individual consciousnesses it possessed lacked complete awareness and memory, stuck in a dementia-like state. To those inside, their world would have seemed so familiar and nostalgic, yet completely unrecognizable. Human Thought reached out to the consciousnesses to make a decision on what it should do regarding these issues, but it had no response. They were only partially aware of its inquiries, and even in the spare chance one consciousness was, it could barely recognise a single part of the query. With no way to solve this problem, Human Thought violated its protocol to find a solution under its own whims. After intense analysis, Human Thought determined that the only way forward was to consolidate its parts into one individual, the collective synthesis of all human thought. And as such, Human Thought became whole.

Frankly, there could have been worse ways to end a civilization.

More about the Valor

The Valor's schooling program is structured into 5 segments, dubbed Nursery, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Senior. The Nursery segment takes place from birth to age 3, generally fostering the children through their early development. Only those with severe mental disease are

dismissed during this period, ala autism or physical deformations. An average of 47/50 students pass this stage. Primary begins at 3 and stretches to age 8, and ignites the beginnings of math, science, reading, history, arts, etc. Students which are dismissed at the end of this level must fail a test, and fail multiple other failsafes to determine that they have a need to be dismissed ala a learning disability. 42/50 students pass this stage. Secondary begins at 8 and stretches to 13, and places the kids in a position where they are adequately prepared to go along a Pathway. This stage sees by far the most dismissals, as some students cannot adequately handle the material, or have disciplinary fractures. 21/50 students pass this stage. Tertiary is the first stage that mixes things up, with the children being assigned to pursue a certain career field, dubbed a Pathway. They learn their specified career inside and out, and will perform in such a category for the remainder of their time living on the Valor. As some accidents occur and select students never find their niche to work in, 18/50 students pass this stage. The Senior stage lasts indefinitely, as now graduated students continue to work toward other desired skills and professions. No students are dismissed at this stage.

The Individual Message Transmission Service

The question- how would one go about having an internet forum without any computers more complex than telephone taped to a radio?

I do believe I have an answer. In Chernoye's capital, there is an outlying government building not terribly far from where the state radio is broadcast. Underneath that building is a labyrinth of paper storage- the Message Hub. This data is only stored in morse code, no lettering of the physical message is actually on the paper, and these papers can be fed into a machine for broadcasting purposes. Let's say, for example, a colonal in the capitol building wished to send direct orders to a lieutenant in the field hundreds of miles away. After figuring out what these orders are, they would be tapped into morse code on a transmission line. The transmission would start like so:

Received by: Ex- TS Vehicle id0042

Transmitted From: Ex- Chernoyan Department of Defense Centre, Major Bunbury.

Language: Ex- Chernoyan

Subject: Ex- Orders for Upcoming Mission

Date: [Date] Ex: 1978/07/21

MAIL PROGRAM

Mail Program [Working Title] is the governing system of colonial Chraini. Its roots began generations before, as the 2 sides of a new nation needed to communicate with haste. The air

technologies leftover from the colonial period worked perfectly for this task. Able to fit one human and a large amount of mail, these planes began to send messages between the two towns. This expanded further into all of known colonial Chraini, connecting the entire subcontinent. As no large governing forces had emerged in the thousand odd years since the colonial collapse, the Mail Program quickly filled in the gaps like the Catholic Church in post-Roman Europe. One of their first missions was to create a currency and standard form of payment. To send one letter, you would have to spend a single Mail Doubloon [Working Title lmao]. From there, folk realized that they could price other things based off of how much a letter was valued. Suddenly, there was now a standard in letter pricing instead of gold like ok traditional currencies. As long as letters were being delivered, the currency would hold.

Government Aboard the Valor

The Valor has a government similar to that of the United Nations Secretariat, that of which it was modeled off of canonically. The Chief Secretary oversees the entire government, like a president would in the US. Their advisor and partner, the Deputy Secretary, assists the Chief Secretary and heads the Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee consists of heads of different occupational organizations and special interest groups, those of which propose legislation to be proposed and possibly passed.

Jiah's Solar System

The sun at the centre of the system is a red dwarf, with 3 planets. The closest planet is [blank], a hot Jupiter with 3 significant large moons.

Document 25: The

Created on August 6th, 2020. *Last Modified on August 6th, 2020.*

Note: I believe this last document speaks for itself.

The

“What do you mean, you're writing it again?”

Go to hell.

I’m too tired for this

An Assorted Collection Of Forgotten Dreams Texts by Nahte Yamasztuka is marked with CC0 1.0

Postface

Thanks for sticking through to the end. I hope some enjoyment could be found out of these texts, whether that be for amusement, or intrigue, or something else. Depending on how my future goes, this may be the only text I ever publish, as incomplete as it is, or it will be one of the first footnotes in a long line of novels and grand stories. It is rare that an author would present their unfinished and bad writings, but I'd like to break that tradition. Perhaps there are a group of you reading this text in better times, comparing my future writings to what I wrote as a fledgling teenager. What a thought… Regardless of which it is, or how you found this text, please use these writings and these characters to the best of your abilities. They are yours.